DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 163 537 CS 502 315

AUTHOR Kincaid, D. Lawrence; And Others
TITLE Mothers' Clubs and Family Planning in Rural Korea: The Case of Oryu Li. Case Study No. 2.
INSTITUTION Hawaii Univ., Honolulu. East-West Center.
PUB DATE Jul 78
NOTE 84p.; Several figures may not reproduce well due to small type

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Communication (Thought Transfer); Economic Development; *Family Planning; Foreign Countries; Information Theory; *National Programs; Population Education
IDENTIFIERS *Communication Research; *Korea

ABSTRACT

The Korean Mothers' Club Program, a large national program of family planning that relies strongly on existing channels of interpersonal communication at the village level for its success, is reviewed in this monograph. The efforts of one such club to help an extremely poor village, Oryu Li, to achieve a large measure of pride, confidence, and economic growth are detailed. Appendixes contain comparative case studies of two Mothers' Clubs and an interview with the leader of the Oryu Li club. (FL)

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MOTHERS' CLUBS AND FAMILY PLANNING IN RURAL KOREA: THE CASE OF ORYU LI

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August 1975
Second Printing July 1978

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CASE STUDY NO. 2
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ABSTRACT

This case study reviews a large national program of family planning communication that relies strongly on existing channels of interpersonal communication at the village level for its success. The authors look at the Korean Mothers' Club program and assess its impact since its inception in 1968. They focus on the village of Oryu Li—an extremely poor village that has achieved a large measure of pride, confidence, and economic growth through the efforts of the Mothers' Club.

D. Lawrence Kincaid is a research associate at the East-West Communication Institute. Hyung-Jong Park, Dean of the School of Public Health, Seoul National University was co-sponsor of this study. Kyung-Kyoon Chung, is Assistant Professor in the School of Public Health, Seoul National University, and Chin-Chuan Lee is a Ph.D. candidate, Center for Population Planning, University of Michigan.

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OVERVIEW

The body of knowledge and experience in planning, implementing, and evaluating development programs is extensive and expanding rapidly. Yet understanding and appreciation of the role of communication in applying this knowledge are often lacking. Those with responsibility for conducting development programs suffer simultaneously from the "information explosion" and from the unavailability of *relevant* and *usable* knowledge. Techniques of application used successfully in one sector of development often have to be rediscovered in other sectors. Valuable experience gained in one country often remains unknown to other countries who face similar problems of using communication for development.

In response to this situation, the East-West Communication Institute conducts a variety of activities within its *Application of Knowledge* subdivision, which are designed to contribute new principles, techniques, and materials for more efficient information sharing and utilization. Since 1970, the Institute has been developing a comprehensive resource base to serve the needs of information, education, and communication (IEC) personnel in family and population planning programs throughout the world. It draws upon the experience gained in other areas of development communication while contributing valuable lessons learned in family and population planning. Today the Institute operates one of the most comprehensive collections of IEC materials available in the world. These include audiovisual materials; all are coded according to audience suitability and are made available on an exchange basis. This facilitates the flow of information and insures that the holdings of the collection are current. Other activities of this resource base include conferences, seminars, workshops, and problem-oriented research on the communication processes involved in linking those who are developing new knowledge with those who can apply it in development programs.

The Institute's case study series of the innovative application of communication theory and practice to the problems of family planning and population has been coordinated by Dr. D. Lawrence Kincaid and is an integral part of the IEC resource base. With the support of the U.S. Agency for International Development, this cooperative activity has grown out of a continuing interaction between Institute staff, other communication scholars, and the IEC staff of family and population planning programs. This case study research series is an example of the Institute's attempt to achieve the goal of better understanding through its work on communication problems of mutual concern to the East and West.

ROBERT P. WORRALL
Assistant Director, EWCI

SERIES PREFACE

The case study research series developed from the expressed need of development program officials and communication scholars for more useful and timely information about some of the innovative ideas and practices that are being applied throughout the world today to solve problems related to family planning and population. Intensive studies of one or more cases have often proven useful for the creation of new insights into a problem, new theories and principles, or new techniques for planned programs of change. A case study of a particularly successful communication activity is also an effective way for program officials to break outside the bounds of current policies and practices. To be useful for this purpose, such studies should accurately describe the activity and then analyze its underlying principles so that they can be more easily replicated elsewhere with the appropriate modifications.

One of the unique aspects of communication programs for development, especially for family planning and population, is the tendency for planners and program officials to search for new ideas and practices in countries which already have had more experience with the same problem. At the same time, those in more experienced programs are often interested in the pilot projects of new programs for similar reasons: to see what kind of ideas and opportunities they might have overlooked. In 1968, for example, a study team from Indonesia went to Taiwan to conduct a case study of their fieldworkers. After a month's study, they returned to Jakarta and recommended that fieldworkers be added to their other IEC activities for family planning. In 1969, they conducted their own pilot project with about thirty fieldworkers. After correcting many of their selecting and operating procedures, more fieldworkers were employed, and by 1971 they had expanded to over 5,000 fieldworkers who were responsible for motivating over one-third of all family planning adopters. The case study of fieldworkers in Taiwan played an important role in the transfer of this communication policy to Indonesia.

There are many examples of this kind of transfer of policy alternatives. The India *Nirodh* campaign has directly affected Kenya's *kinga* campaign, and a similar project for subsidized condom sales through commercial channels is also underway in Jakarta. Ideas like India's intensive vasectomy campaigns, Taiwan's and Indonesia's record systems, programs for newlyweds, telephone answering services, postpartum education, functional literacy, and so forth, are discussed continuously and circulated through conferences and other forms of international communication.

A case study is intensive research whose primary purpose is descriptive or comparative analysis. It investigates an intentionally limited or restricted range of

phenomena in a relatively thorough manner. It is usually less concerned with providing a data base for the generalization of results than with more extensive, quantitative research. It is based on the assumption that it is sometimes more useful to know a "lot about a little, than a little about a lot." Although a "case study" has a misleading reputation for being relatively less structured than other types of research, it is not unplanned, nor does it lack a well-prepared, rigorous research design. Depending upon the specific topic and the purpose of the researcher, a case study may include quantitative types of data, as well as descriptive information. The definition of a "case" may range from "one day in the life of a fieldworker" to "twenty-five years of experience in China." The particular advantage of limiting the study to one case, or comparing a small number of cases, is that as new ideas and new sources of data are encountered during the study, they can be pursued and thus enrich the final analysis.

This research series will present a wide variety of case study topics: the use of mothers' clubs in rural Korea, the use of traditional midwives in Asia, strategies for increasing elite support for family planning in Kenya, (a comparison of organizational communication in two family planning agencies), a comparison of themes, slogans, and nonverbal symbols used for family planning communication, family planning communication in the People's Republic of China, the uses of commercial resources, and so forth. We have not attempted to include all of the important innovations in family planning and population communication. Many institutions and organizations throughout the world are also contributing reports of new, or especially effective, communication activities. To avoid an unnecessary duplication of effort, we have collaborated with other institutions who desired to study the same topic. We have also attempted to select topics which might have otherwise been overlooked, or underreported. Finally, some preference has been given to activities where a substantial amount of information already existed, but had not yet been synthesized into a comprehensive report. All of the studies in this series were planned and conducted in cooperation with researchers from other institutions who were associated with, or knowledgeable about, the topic to be studied.

Case study research is in widespread use throughout the world today. With more planning and systematic direction, it can become an important means for sharing new ideas about mutual problems and for improving the implementation of communication policies and programs.

D. LAWRENCE KINCAID
Research Associate, EWCI

PREFACE

This paper is one of a series of research reports that have resulted from the Case Study Research Program of the East-West Communication Institute. This program was sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development, under a general grant to create an international resource base of information, research, and professional experience in the field of information, communication, and education for population and family planning. The Case Study Research Program was designed to provide new knowledge about some of the outstanding, innovative approaches to the application of communication to the problem of population and family planning.

Family planning officials and scholars often express the need for new ideas and innovative approaches that can provide more effective alternatives to current practices. One way to break through the bonds of current policy is by providing intensive case studies of exemplary activities that have been attempted in other locations. These case studies should accurately describe the exemplary activity, and then analyze its underlying principles so that they can be considered for replication with appropriate modifications for other settings.

The Korean Mothers' Club Program fulfills all the requirements. Much has been written about it in periodicals and international newsletters concerned with the problem of population. Visitors to the East-West Communication Institute have often expressed interest in learning more about it. The few pieces of research which are available on the subject usually do not provide very thorough descriptions about how the program actually operates and the results are, for the most part, inconclusive. Until recently the Mothers' Club Program had been growing and developing too rapidly to describe it adequately. It has only now been in existence long enough to begin assessing the impact it may be having on the problems of population and rural development.

This case study treats the change and development of the program since 1968, and the growth and development that it created in one particular village. By the time the reader leafs through the pages of this report the Korean Mothers' Club Program will have undergone further changes and adaptations. It is not so much an "object" of study as it is a special *approach* to family planning communication and development. It attempts to utilize the natural advantages of existing channels of interpersonal communication in rural villages by providing the necessary organizational structure, external support, and guidance. Therefore, the program has made several innovative changes since it began in order to adapt to changing circumstances and take advantage of opportunities that have arisen. It is this process of development of a large-scale national program which should be of greatest interest to policy makers and scholars in other countries.

This is only the first part of a larger study which will follow. Future reports will compare two other villages which were part of the national survey of Mothers' Clubs, describe in detail the patterns and networks of family planning communication in three villages, and discuss in greater depth the theoretical implications of our research. The main purpose of this initial paper is to provide an overall description of the national program and an intensive description of one successful club.

A twenty-five minute, synchronized, color slide and cassette tape presentation (with script) entitled *Mothers' Clubs and Family Planning in Rural Korea,* has also been produced to provide a more dramatic, audiovisual documentation of the miraculous changes that took place in the village of Oryu *Li.* It is available in English from the East-West Communciation Institute, and in Korean from the Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea.

The opportunity to plan and organize this study came when Kyung-Kyoon Chung, an Assistant Professor of the School of Public Health, Seoul National University, participated in the East-West Communication Institute's Professional Development Program during the spring of 1973. He directed all of the field work for this case study, and contributed many of the valuable insights which he had gained from his national study.

Dr. Hyung-Jong Park, the Dean of the School of Public Health, Seoul National University, served as the co-sponsor for this study. He was responsible for maintaining effective liaison with all the government officials, the officials of the Planned Parenthood Federation, and local community leaders whose enthusiastic cooperation made this research possible.

In particular, we would like to thank Joo Hyun Lee, the Secretary General of PPFK, for selecting such an excellent Mothers' Club for our study and for making his field staff available to us during the course of our investigation. We are especially grateful to Duck Chun Yoo, who initiated the Mothers' Club Program in 1968, for accompanying us to the field and for contributing all of the experience he had gained from directing the program during its first six years. We are grateful for the material which had been previously collected by George Worth of the Population Council, and for the additional questions which he raised at the beginning of our study. We would also like to thank June Ock Yum, EWCI graduate student, for her skillful translation of the tape recordings of group discussions and interviews from the village of Oryu *Li,* and for her valuable insight into their interpretation. And finally, we would like to thank everyone else who contributed to this project who are too numerous to mention individually.

1

THE KOREAN MOTHERS' CLUB PROGRAM

Introduction

In 1968, the Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea (PPFK) initiated the reorganization of traditional women's groups in the rural villages in order to make use of existing systems of interpersonal communication and local opinion leadership to improve the national family planning program. By the middle of 1973, 22,533 such clubs had been organized throughout Korea on two levels: the "legal" village, the smallest governmental administrative unit comprised of two or three "natural" villages; and the level of the natural village itself. The Republic of Korea today has approximately 48,000 natural villages.

In order to provide better knowledge and practical recommendations to family planning officials and international organizations for the improvement of Mothers' Club operations, the School of Public Health of Seoul National University conducted a national sample survey of Mothers' Clubs in June of 1973. Their study examined such factors as the knowledge, attitudes, and practice of family planning; general socioeconomic characteristics of members and nonmembers; channels of communication; and local leadership patterns.

To complement this research project, the East-West Communication Institute sponsored an intensive comparative analysis of three representative Mothers' Clubs of different levels of activity and effectiveness, and in different geographical areas. The three studies were designed to provide a thorough description and analysis of (1) how Mothers' Clubs are organized and how they operate on both the national and local level, (2) how Mothers' Clubs are functionally integrated into other family planning and village development activities, and (3) how Mothers' Club activities contribute to family planning

practice. The results of the national survey, along with the case studies, will provide useful recommendations for further improvement of the Mothers' Club Program, and for devising guidelines for the organization of similar indigenous groups to promote family planning in other countries.

The Family Planning Program of Korea

The Korean family planning program is the responsibility of three organizations. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs plans and coordinates the basic service system, including the 1,467 fieldworkers who do home visitation. The Korean Institute for Family Planning (KIFP) is responsible for research, evaluation, and training for the national program, and the training of fieldworkers. The Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea (PPFK) is responsible for public information and education, including the administration of the Mothers' Club program and the operation of fourteen model urban clinics. PPFK programs extend throughout Korea through branch offices in each province and in the autonomous city of Pusan.

The relationships between these three organizations is shown in Figure 1, an organizational chart that outlines the basic operational structure of Korea's Family Planning Program. As indicated, the primary line of authority of the national government is the responsibility of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Although the county family planning fieldworkers are technically employees of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, they are under the direct supervision of the County Chief (*Kun* Chief), who is responsible to the Provincial Governor and Minister of Home Affairs. In practice, this means that if the national government, for example, decides to place its highest priority on rural road construction during a given time period, then the *Kun* Chief has the prerogative to instruct family planning workers to devote some of their time talking about this project with villagers in addition to their regular duties.

Figure 1 shows that there are 19,000 legal villages (*li*'s), which suggests that each one has at least one of the 22,533 existing Mothers'

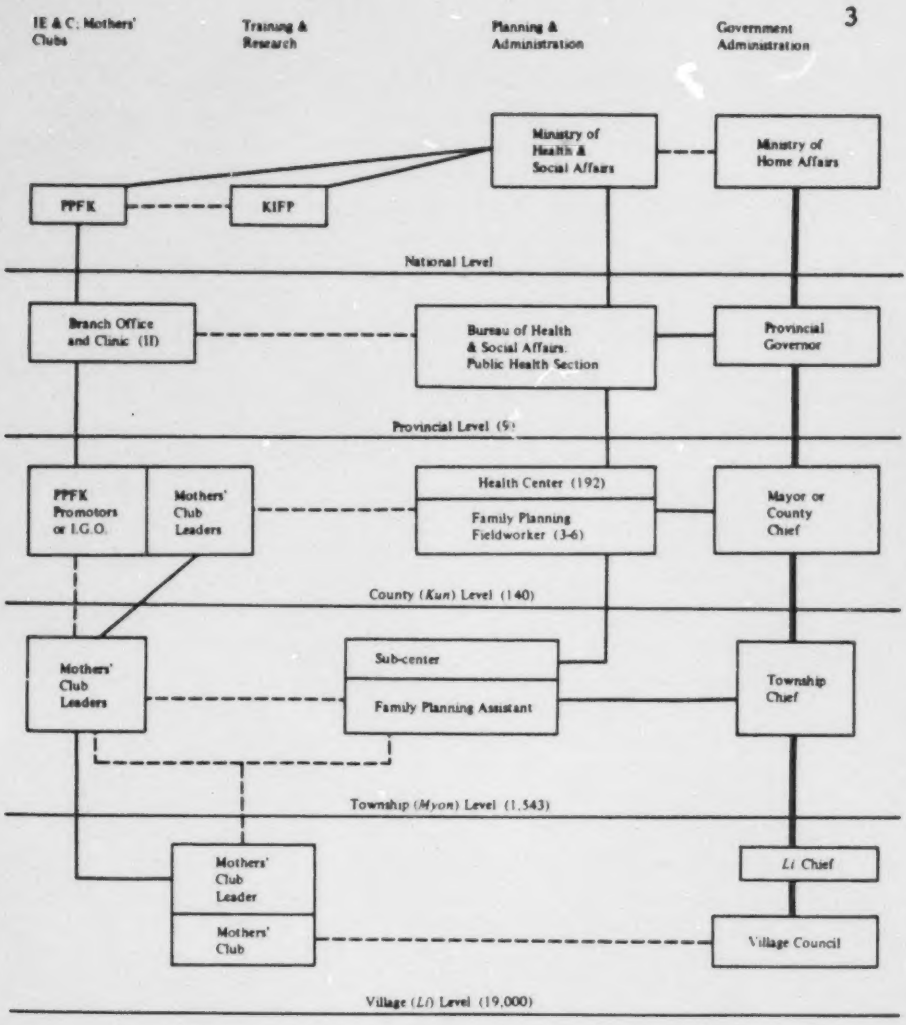

*FIGURE 1. The Korean Family Planning Operational Structure**

*Courtesy of Dr. Sung Hee Yun, Director of Information and Publications, PPFK, Seoul, Korea, 1974.

Clubs.* This is misleading, however, because clubs were only initially organized at the administrative *li* level. For several years now new clubs have been organized at the level of the natural *li* (of which there are approximately 45,000). Therefore, in some administrative *li*'s all of the natural *li*'s may have their own Mothers' Club, while other administrative *li*'s may still be without a Mothers' Club.

Mothers' Club leaders are shown at three different organizational levels in the chart. At the bottom, there are volunteer leaders of Mothers' Clubs at either the administrative or natural *li* level. Next, these leaders comprise the membership of the *Myon* (township) Mothers' Club Association. At the highest level the leaders of each *myon* association then become the members of the *Kun* Mothers' Club Association. The *Kun* Mothers' Club Leader is thus the highest Mothers' Club representative in each of the provinces, each with an average of 15-16 *kuns*.

There are several other national organizations active on the village level which are not shown on this chart. The Women's Affairs Section of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has organized village groups known as "Wives' Clubs," through the provincial and local governmental units. Their purpose is to encourage cooperative activities by village women, and to help them with various social programs. These clubs are supervised by a female staff member in the *kun* office with the cooperation of the *Li* Chief. The Extension Service of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has also organized village women into "New Life Clubs," which concentrate on basic home economics education, such as nutrition, cooking, clothes making, kitchen improvement, home sanitation, etc. They are supervised by home demonstration agents from the *Kun* Extension Service Offices.

It might appear that the proliferation of so many different clubs in each village would lead to confusion, or perhaps even dissention,

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*Park, et al. (1974) found approximately 1.3 Mothers' Clubs per legal *li* in their national survey.

among village women. In most villages, however, there is really only *one* women's group comprised of the same members which assumes the name and functions of each club depending upon the main topic of the meeting, or the agent who is visiting the village. One of the purposes of this study is to determine whether or not the various government promoters, fieldworkers, and supervisors compete for, or cooperate in, the use of village women's groups to accomplish their respective objectives.

President Park, through the Ministry of Home Affairs, launched the New Village Movement in 1972 in order to accelerate development of the rural sector and improve its standard of living relative to the urban sector. This program included the organization of yet another women's group in rural villages, called New Village Movement (NVM) Women's Club, to help accomplish the goals of this program. One of the purposes of this group is to form one, multipurpose club to coordinate the activities of all of the other women's clubs on the village level. Cooperation among the various government agents who work with these groups is stressed in order to eliminate overlap and dysfunctional competition. Thus, hypothetically at least, the record keeping and reporting functions are simplified, and each meeting counts for all of the headquarters' reports by the supervisory agents. One of the questions of this study is whether or not this accumulation of functions has caused any "overload" on the village women at the expense of the family planning program.

A Brief History of the Mothers' Club Program

The traditional Korean village always has had a village council whose purpose is to carry out any business that is of interest to the village as a whole, such as the management of community property and communal duties like cleaning wells, repairing roads, and weeding the village's fields. The elected chief of the council has grown in importance since the government began national village development programs, and since the Ministry of Home Affairs established Village Development Councils (or Committees) in 1964. Women have

traditionally been excluded from participation in the affairs of the village council.

Another important village organization is the family clan, whose purpose is to maintain the records of family members and to care for the graves of clan ancestors of four preceeding generations or more, as the graves of more recent ancestors are the responsibility of individual families. The leader of each family clan is always the eldest son of the oldest generation. The clan leader manages the property, money, or common land of the clan *kae* (club), and he is responsible for holding annual ceremonies on October 15 to honor clan ancestors. This also serves to maintain friendship and solidarity among clan members.

Women were not a part of village councils, but they did have their own groups and organizations. After the Korean War, the most important women's organization in rural areas became *kae*. A group of friends meet on a regular basis (monthly, for example) to pool their money so that one member at each meeting may borrow a larger sum of money to meet her special needs. A *kae* may be organized to accumulate funds for general purposes, or it may be organized especially for one time only in order to collect money for a specific purpose such as a trip, new household furnishings, weddings, funerals, education, etc.

In some ways, a *kae* functions much like a collective savings and loan organization. The earlier that a member took her turn and received the funds pooled by all of the members, the higher the interest she had to pay. This could be managed easily by merely having the earliest members pay more each meeting, on a gradually declining scale, to the last person to receive the fund. Thus, they all receive the same amount, but the first members to receive the fund pay in more than the later members who are thus compensated for having to wait longer to borrow.

Many other ways of paying interest and receiving the pooled funds are also used, but the general principle is similar to the "buy now, pay later" credit system found in modern economies throughout the world. The major difference, however, is the unusually high rate of interest. It often reaches 50% on a yearly basis, but this is still better than regular money lenders, who may charge as much as 100% or more for cash loans, and 50% for grain. Any system that

can reduce the rate of interest below 50% is quite an improvement.

The leader, or organizer, of the *kae* is its most important member, because she is responsible for calculating the members' regular payments and interest, keeping the records, and insuring that the members selected for the *kae* continue their participation (and payments) until everyone has shared in the funds. The traditional money *kae* offered village women a unique opportunity to assume positions of leadership that are otherwise denied. Today's Mothers' Clubs are, to a great extent, derived from the common experience, collective spirit, and mutual aid of these traditional women's organizations.*

The first official attempt to integrate these informal groups of village women into a national development program was in 1962, when the National Reconstruction Movement organized 45,000 "family planning maternal and child health classes" at the level of natural villages, and gave members training for organization and guidance for group discussions. About $US 0.75 was donated by the government every month to cover the expenses of their meetings. One of the topics discussed during this period was family planning. These early efforts were apparently so successful that the 1964 KAP survey, just two years later, discovered that rural women were more familiar with family planning than were urban ones (Copp and Worth, 1972). Most of these group meetings lasted only one year, however, terminating soon after the monthly donation was dropped.

As a result of the information and education activities of government fieldworkers and the mass media, by 1968 a favorable climate had been created for the family planning program. As the program progressed it soon became evident that a large percentage of the target population were roughly familiar with the concept of family planning, but many were still quite ignorant of the contraceptive

*An early study by H.K. Lee (1936) gives some indication of the extension of *kaes* throughout rural Korean society. He found 58 *kaes* of various kinds in 183 villages in different parts of Korea, with a total membership of 2,900 out of 7,366 people within the 1249 farm households studied (or about two out of every five persons). Traditional *kaes* were dominated by men until after WWII and the Korean War, when women began organizing *kaes* for their own purposes.

methods required for actual practice. Moreover, when family planning methods were adopted, the drop-out rate was found to be as high as 50% in some areas. The job of bridging the knowledge-action gap and of reducing discontinuance could not be adequately accomplished by the mass media alone. The heavy burden fell naturally on the shoulders of government health-education workers, the only official channel of interpersonal communication available at that time.

By 1968, the Korean family planning program was well organized with fieldworkers assigned even to the township (*myon*) level (Copp and Worth, 1972). In each of the more than 45,000 natural villages, however, there was no single person with responsibility for family planning, for recruiting of acceptors, or for maintaining contacts with the township health workers. Supposedly, each fieldworker was responsible for services to approximately 2,200 eligible couples, who lived in fifty to sixty natural villages.

It had become obvious that fieldworkers were much too burdened to accomplish the whole task, therefore, the Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea, under authority from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, began transforming traditional village women's groups into official family planning Mothers' Clubs in 1968. Originally, each club was organized in one administrative *li*, and the average club consisted of twelve women. A village woman had to satisfy several criteria for membership: (1) to be able to read and write, (2) to be affiliated with at least one other community activity, and (3) to be a mother between the ages twenty and forty-five. This meant that in the beginning membership tended to consist of older women with more education and a higher social status in the village. By the end of 1968, about 12,650 Mothers' Clubs had been organized.

The original goals of the Mothers' Club Program were designed to improve the overall family planning program in Korea:

(1) To create a local, voluntary movement of mothers to encourage family planning practice.
(2) To aid fieldworkers in finding new acceptors.
(3) To serve as a channel for family planning information and contraceptive supplies.
(4) To encourage participation in community development activities.

The main strategy behind the program was to accelerate *interpersonal communication* about family planning at the village level, and to legitimize family planning practice among village women.

Mothers' club leaders were initially appointed by the *Li* Chief, and the members were also recommended by community leaders from among eligible village women. Each club was expected to hold at least four meetings a year, supported by a 500 *won* (US $1.25) donation to cover some of the expenses of the meetings. This money came originally from funds established through foreign donor agencies and a supplemental government budget, but it was replaced eventually by sales from contraceptive pills.

During the first year, 139 male "Pill Administrators and Community Organizers" (PACO) were selected and trained by PPFK, and then placed in the county health centers throughout the country. They were responsible for supporting Mothers' Club activities and for collecting money from the sale of oral pills (at US $0.11 per cycle). In 1972, their responsibility for oral pills diminished, and their name was changed accordingly to "Information and Guidance Officer" (IGO). Their primary responsibility became the supervision and coordination of an average of 400 Mothers' Clubs each, over an area of two to three *kuns*. Although many still maintain offices in the county health centers, today they are responsible directly to the PPFK provincial branch offices.

The guidance officers' problems with transportation over such a large area were solved in 1973 with the arrival of new motorcycles donated by the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA). Next in importance to the fieldworkers in each of the county health centers, the PPFK information and guidance officers are the most influential change agents working with the Mothers' Clubs today. The IGO designation has never really been adopted on the local level, and today the PPFK extension workers are often referred to simply as the PPFK Mothers' Club "promoters."

PPFK distributes *Happy Home*, a monthly magazine, to each Mothers' Club leader to provide discussion topics and guidance for monthly meetings. It is one of the major publications of PPFK, with articles and interesting stories relevant to all phases of home life in addition to family planning. In almost every issue it has a photostory about one successful Mothers' Club to encourage other clubs.

In the beginning, 20,000 copies were published, but its circulation has now grown to over 60,000 copies. With the help of the promoter and fieldworker, *Happy Home* today is used by Mothers' Club leaders to improve the quality of their monthly meetings and to sustain their members' motivation for family planning and home improvement.

The Mothers' Club Program Today*

Today, external financial assistance is no longer provided by the Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea. Approximately three-fourths of the existing Mothers' Clubs either have, or are organizing, a Mothers' Club Bank, which functions as a savings and credit union. Over one-half of the clubs already have some funds, and the average amount of the funds per club is 38,900 *won* (US $97.25). Although this may seem like a meager beginning, if this estimate of the average size per fund is aggregated for half of all the existing Mothers' Clubs, the total is over one million U.S. dollars. The large number of Mothers' Clubs (22,533 in 1973) suggests that Mothers' Clubs offer a tremendous potential for future rural development in Korea. Their funds are growing each month; soon over three-fourths of all clubs will have their own banks. If invested wisely, this previously untapped source of capital should begin to contribute substantially to economic development in the rural sector.

The annual growth of the Mothers' Club Program has been phenomenal indeed. In the first year, 12,650 were organized officially. By the end of 1969, 2,057 clubs were added; 1,943 clubs in 1970;

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*All of the information reported in this section is from Park and Chung's (1974) national survey of Mothers' Clubs conducted in 1973. National estimates are based on their probability sample of 450 leaders selected in three stages: (1) a random sample of 25 counties, (2) selection of two townships within each county, and (3) a proportional sample of an average of nine village Mothers' Club leaders. From the total sample of 450 leaders, 383 were interviewed. A census of all eligible women up to age 49 was conducted in one representative village in each of the 25 counties sampled originally. The total number of women interviewed in this special community sample was 1,014.

2,000 in 1971; 2,883 in 1972; and over 1,000 new clubs had appeared by April of 1973, for a total of 22, 533 clubs. (See Figure 2).

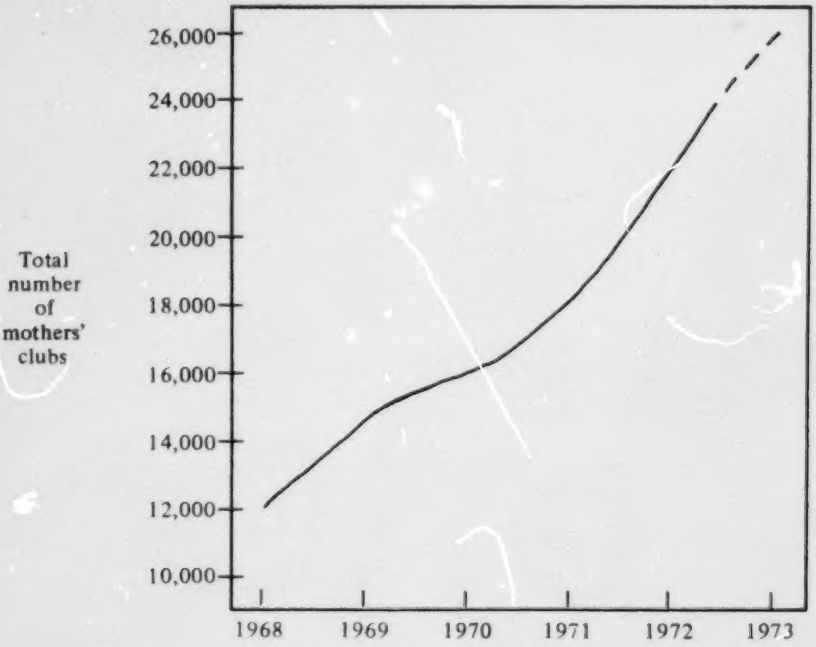

*FIGURE 2. The Annual Growth of Mothers' Clubs since 1968**

Not all of these clubs report the same level of activity, however. Using data from the survey of Mothers' Club leaders (N=383) regarding the regularity of club meetings, their level of attendance, and their frequency, it has been estimated that about 10% of the clubs, are very active, 38% are moderately active, and 15% are inactive.

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*Based on annual records obtained from *kun* and *myon* chiefs.

The average number of members per club has risen gradually since the program's beginning. There was an average of 23 members per club in 1968, but this had grown to 30.5 members by 1972. There is a noticeable tendency for club membership to increase the longer it has been in existence. Today, the clubs formed in 1968 have an average size of 41 members, four-year old clubs average 33 members, three-year old clubs average 30 members, two-year old clubs average 23 members, and one-year old clubs average 21 members.

Over one-third of the Mothers' Club leaders who were interviewed said that there were other wives in their village who wanted to become members of their club. Only nine percent said that they would refuse new members in order to maintain their club at its present size. When nonmembers in the twenty-five villages were asked why they had not joined, two-thirds replied that they had never been encouraged to join. Sixteen percent had been asked to join, but said they were uninterested. Other reasons for not joining included lack of time, opposition to family planning, recency of arrival to the village, and lack of money to invest in the Mothers' Club Bank. There are two main types of admission procedures used by the clubs: (1) decision by the leader (37%), and (2) a joint decision based on consensus at a meeting (38%). The remaining clubs either have no policy (15%), or simply do not allow new members to join (9%). Most of the club leaders reported no problems with members leaving the club (83%), and those clubs that had dropouts gave such reasons as: low involvement from the beginning, family objection, contraceptive failures, bad relationships with other members, and pregnancy.

A majority of the clubs hold regular meetings at least once a month (70%), and the remainder either meet every two months or irregularly as necessary. Only a very small proportion of the existing clubs require fieldworkers (3%) or other outsiders (7%) to summon members for a meeting. Most meetings are called by the club's leader (65%), or by the assistant leader and Mothers' Club Promoter (25%). Attendance at club meetings is very high in most villages. The average attendance rate for all clubs was 76%, and almost one-half of all of the clubs have at least 90% of their members in attendance at every meeting. At the time of the survey, 66% of the clubs were meeting at their leader's house, 22% were meeting at their village community hall, and 9% were meeting in a school or other public building. Only 3% of the clubs have their own Mothers' Club Meeting Hall.

The introduction of the Mothers' Club Banks probably encouraged the clubs to increase their membership. A club of forty to fifty members provides a much better foundation for savings and credit than one with only twelve to fifteen members. Membership requirements have been relaxed accordingly, so that today the only official requirement is that a member be a mother between the ages twenty and forty-five. Almost all of the clubs keep a record of members' names (89%), attendance records (70%), a financial account book (73%), and a collection of *Happy Home* magazines. Accurate records and account books are very important for good management, and the high percentage of clubs which maintain all four of these records (41%) is quite an achievement in such a short period of time. It indicates that very capable organizations are being developed in most of these villages.

Although family planning is reported as the most important topic of discussion during Mothers' Club meetings (63%), many clubs are actively involved in New Village Movement development projects and with their own savings campaigns. According to the national survey of leaders, 30% of the clubs are working on New Village Movement projects, 9% are currently operating cooperative enterprises such as village stores, 12% are working together as common labor on neighboring farms, and 6% are providing mutual assistance for neighbors.

To attain a better picture of the scope of these other Mothers' Club activities, we conducted a brief content analysis of the "Mothers' Club of the Month," featured in the *PPFK Activity Reports* from May, 1971 to July, 1973. These unusually successful clubs were chosen for their accomplishments in general village development as well as in family planning. Aside from family planning, their activities fell into three broad categories:

(1) Cooperative Agricultural Projects
Fruit and vegetable gardens, greenhouses, small livestock projects, mulberry plants for silk worms, and even pine tree projects, cared for ". . . as if they were bringing up their own children."

(2) Community Construction Project
Special buildings for club meetings, weddings, and other village activities; concrete bridges, street pavement, playgrounds, replacement of thatched roofs with tile, etc.

(3) Income-Producing Projects
Cooperative stores, rope-making and noodle factories for the idle winter months, clothes making in the home, and so forth.

The foundation and stimulus for many of these projects seems to be the mutual credit and savings union sponsored by the village mothers' club.

Over the last three years one of the main methods that PPFK has used to improve the program has been intensive training programs for mothers' club leaders, assistant leaders, and secretaries. By the middle of 1973 approximately 1,900 leaders had participated in one-week training courses on family planning, credit union management, and record-keeping procedures. Recently this training has begun to shift from Seoul to the provincial branch offices, in order to reduce the amount of time that leaders spend traveling and away from their own homes. It is likely that more emphasis will be given to training leaders from the *myon* and *kun* associations because their impact covers a much larger area.

Almost 50% of the Mothers' Club leaders who were originally appointed in 1968 have now been replaced. PPFK's official policy allows for leaders to hold office for only two years, and the club must hold a new election before a leader's term can be extended further. The turnover rate for leaders has increased somewhat since 1971-1972, and today one-half of the leaders are now in their first or second year-long term. According to Park and Chung (1974, p. 235), "This appears to be the result partly of local adjustments stemming from PPFK's program to strengthen the Mothers' Club and partly of organizational strengthening resulting from the New Village Movement."

Using data from the survey of Mothers' Club leaders, we have created a profile of the "typical" leader by using the average or modal response category for selected questions. The reader should note, that it is possible that none of the leaders interviewed have all of the characteristics of our "typical" leader, who is based on the aggregate response.

The "Typical" Mothers' Club Leader

The "typical" Mothers' Club leader is approaching the age of forty.* She has three sons and three daughters, so she practices family planning in order not to have any more children. She prefers the loop (I.U.D.) method almost twice as much as the oral pill. She thinks that the ideal family would consist of two sons and one daughter.

She is better informed than other villagers and the other members of the Mothers' Club about the contraceptive methods which are available. She has enough knowledge to tell others how to safely use the loop, oral pills, condoms, and vasectomies, and tubal ligations. She is less familiar with diaphragm, withdrawal, basic body temperature, and rhythm methods of contraception. She is a family planning opinion leader in her village; more people say they would go to her first to get inforamtion about a "new" method of contraception than to others in the village. She has personally persuaded over nine mothers to adopt the oral pill and loop methods of family planning. She currently supplies oral pills and condoms to village mothers.

Like most rural wives in Korea, she originally came from a different village than her husband's village, but she is from the same county (*kun*). Her husband's occupation is primarily in agriculture, rather than government service, commerce, or skilled manual labor. Our typical Mothers' Club leader has graduated from primary school, she has no religious affiliation, and she perceives herself as belonging basically to the middle socioeconomic class within her village.** She visits the nearby city more often than most village mothers.

She has been the leader of her Mothers' Club for almost four years, but she has not yet attended PPFK's voluntary training program for leaders in Seoul. She has been invited, but she has been unable to attend because of her responsibility for household duties. She thinks that her club will continue to develop and improve in the future. Although there have occasionally been some problems in the past with a lack of cooperation and discord among members, and

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*The average age of leaders is 38.8 years, whereas the average age for family planning fieldworkers is much lower at 27.3 years, (Park and Chung, 1974).

**Only 20 percent of the leaders surveyed have finished middle school, and 4 percent have finished high school. At least 64 percent have completed primary school, however.

with financial procedures, she reports that there are no serious problems today and that everything has gone as smoothly as was expected. She feels that her involvement as leader has been a worthwhile experience.

The data from the national survey of leaders and the census of eligible mothers from twenty-five villages gives us a good general description of the Mothers' Club from its initiation in 1968 until the middle of 1973. Our case study of one of Korea's most successful Mothers' Clubs will give us a more thorough analysis of how one club developed during this same period of time. A detailed description of how this club's leader helped her club to overcome its early difficulties will complete the picture we have drawn of the "typical" leader based on aggregate data. To understand this case in its proper context, however, we will first review the current demographic situation in Korea, previous research on the Mothers' Club Program, and some of the prospects for the future.

Mothers' Clubs and the Current Demographic Situation

By the middle of 1974, the population of South Korea had reached 35 million (Chang, et al., 1974). According to a recent report of the Korean family planning program (Kim, Ross, and Worth, 1972), Korea has better prospects of bringing its population growth under control than perhaps any other developing country. The family planning effort became official government policy in 1961, mass publicity and public services were started in 1962-1963, and in 1964 the decision was made to place a fieldworker in every *myon* (township, average population, 10,000). According to Cho's (1973) estimates, the crude birth rate in South Korea declined from 43 in 1960 to 33 in 1966, and dropped to 29 in 1970:*

> To recapitulate, the 33 percent decline in the South Korean crude birth rate in the period 1960-1970 is one of the most rapid population

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*KIFP's multipurpose survey in 1973 shows that this decline has continued. They estimated the birth rate at 28 births per 1,000 population and the crude death rate at 8-9 per 1,000, yielding an annual growth rate of 1.9-2.0 (Chang, et al., 1974).

> changes observed in the history of mankind...More significantly, the rate of the fertility decline in the rural areas was about the same as in urban areas (p. 17).

Approximately 40% of this decline is attributable to changes in the age-sex structure of the population and to a rise in the average age of marriage to age 27 for men and 23 for women. On the other hand, *60%* of the total decline in births was due to a reduction in marital fertility. Cho concludes that "...the fertility decline in the younger ages is largely due to a sharp drop in the proportion married; but the lower fertility among women 35 and older is due, to a large extent, to their adoption of contraception and abortion" (1973, p. 11).

Even more remarkable is the fact that whereas urban fertility declined faster in the first part of the last decade, *rural fertility* declined at a faster rate in the second half of the decade. And finally, only 45% of the decline of the urban birth rate over these ten years was attributed to lower marital fertility, *but in the rural areas almost 60% of the fertility decline resulted from lowered marital fertility.* As would be expected, the changing age structure and rising age for marriage is more important in the urban areas: 23% of the decline in births in urban areas, and 18.5% in the rural areas.

According to sample survey data from KAP (*K*nowledge, *A*ttitudes, and *P*ractice) studies reported by Moon and others (1972, p. 90), the percentage of eligible women in urban areas using some form of contraception increased from 26% to 27% from 1966 to 1971. During this same period in the *rural areas*, however, the percentage of eligible women using contraceptives increased from 18% to 23%. In other words, by end of the 1960's, rural women were closing the gap in contraceptive adoption and usage in comparison to their urban counterparts. The 1971 survey also revealed that for all age groups (under 24 to 49) the use of induced abortion was highest in Seoul (40%), followed by other urban areas (34%), with rural areas lowest (19%).

What is so remarkable about the Korean demographic situation compared to other countries is that they have had considerable success in reducing the imbalance between urban and rural areas in contraceptive knowledge, accessibility, and practice. The problem of reaching the rural population with the family planning program has long been considered one of the most difficult obstacles for population programs.

As Cho's recent report shows, the national family planning program in Korea is able to claim a large share of the credit for the rapid fertility decline in its rural areas, particularly among older women. The Mothers' Classes in 1962, the formal initiation of the Mothers' Club Program in 1968 by PPFK, and the family planning fieldworkers provided by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs deserve a large share of the credit for the rural family planning program in Korea.

Previous Research on Mothers' Clubs

Because the rural sector has been reducing its fertility so rapidly since 1965, and because a great proportion of this reduction can be attributed specifically to a reduction in fertility of older married women, it is very easy to conclude that the Mothers' Club Program has contributed substantially to Korea's *rural* family planning effort. The services and contraceptive supplies were made available during this period. The Mothers' Clubs were used by family planning fieldworkers to reach eligible women and to distribute oral pills after 1968, and the early Mothers' Club membership was comprised primarily of older women who had as many children as they desired.

It is possible, however, that the basic movement of rural women toward family planning had already been initiated by the fieldworkers, clinics, and mass publicity campaigns, and that the introduction of birth control pills and the Mothers' Club Program in 1968 merely took advantage of this trend and accelerated the process of change. Nevertheless, the clinics, the fieldworkers, and the Mothers' Clubs *are* the family program in rural Korea. The success of the program should be attributed to all of these components. The clubs were designed to improve the fieldworkers' effectiveness in their assigned villages. Therefore, the fieldworkers are perhaps the best informal source of information about the effectiveness of the Mothers' Club Program. In general, there is a consensus among fieldworkers that the clubs make their job much easier. It helps them overcome many obstacles to reaching rural mothers.

Nevertheless, the assessment of the impact of the Mothers' Club Program has been a difficult problem for research from its beginning. Early research on the program was relatively inconclusive.

A study in Koyang county near Seoul in 1967 (see Kim, Ross, Worth, 1972, p. 93) indicated that villages with a Mothers' Club with

a good IUD educational program had a higher IUD acceptance rate than control villages where Mothers' Clubs were not organized. Effectiveness seemed to depend on three facotrs: (1) the supervisor or organizer, (2) the enthusiasm of the club leader, and (3) club finances. Inactivity among clubs seemed to be associated with long absence of a family planning worker from the area, lack of good club leadership, or lack of official interest in the county itself.

In 1969-1970 a field experiment was conducted in the Gyeonggi-Yonsei area of Korea. Unfortunately, because there was considerable contamination in the control areas, the results showed little difference between villages with Mothers' Clubs and those without them. Furthermore, the study concludes that "Neither in the study areas nor (as far as has been measured) nationwide do mothers' classes appear to have been very effective in increasing contraceptive use" (Yang, et al., Yonsei University, 1972, p. 51). This is not to say, however, that the program has not contributed to the family planning program. This report also concluded that the Mothers' Clubs provided stable contacts at the village level during a period of general program difficulties and high fieldworker turnover. In short, the clubs may have created a more favorable climate and given invaluable local legitimization for family planning work. "They have at least made the fieldworker's job easier and this should not be underrated as an achievement in its own right" (Yang, et al., Yonsei University, 1972, p. 51).

It is quite likely that these early studies may have been conducted after too short of a time interval for the effect of Mothers' Clubs on family planning acceptance to manifest itself. Note that even areas without Mothers' Clubs are exposed to some type of family planning promotion. The short range contribution of the Mothers' Clubs should be their facilitation of other family planning promotional activities, such as the fieldworker and the mobile team visits. Over the long run, however, this contribution should begin to affect family planning practice, especially on the rates of continuation and in the more remote rural areas.*

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*It is possible that family planning was not emphasized enough for such "treatment" effects to occur during the first few years of the program.

The most recent information on the impact of Mothers' Clubs comes from Park and Chung's (1974, p. 166) national survey. Table 1 gives a summary of their findings on the relationship between Mothers' Club membership and current family planning status. Approximately 35% of the eligible women in the 25 villages studied (N=1000) are practicing some form of contraception. The proportion is substantially higher for those who are members of the Mothers' Club in their village. Forty-six percent of the members are currently practicing family planning, while only 28% of the nonmembers now practice. The proportion of leaders (N=383) who practice is as high as 67%. These figures give us an indication of the effect of the Mothers' Clubs *within* villages that have clubs, but shows no relationship between villages with clubs and villages without Mothers' Clubs.*

These results are very positive, especially when you consider the additional finding that as many as 72% of the club members, 46% of the nonmembers, and 83% of the leaders have practiced some form of contraception in the past (have *ever practiced*). Of the 42% who have never practiced in the village sample, 44% said it was because they wanted more *sons* or children, 5% said specifically that they wanted another daughter, and 32% claimed that they were infertile. Most important, only 8% have never practiced because they believe the methods are harmful to their health; only 8% did not know which method was best or where to go for services; and only 3% have never practiced because of opposition from their husbands or parents-in-law. This means that the often common reasons for not practicing, ignorance and opposition, have been almost eliminated in these villages, and that the main reasons for not practicing may be quite rational: some still want to have more children.

There is a problem with this conclusion, however. We expect those who are pregnant or who want to become pregnant not to practice contraception. But almost a third of the village women (30%) claim that they do not want to get pregnant, but that they do not practice contraception. This important group of women are called *pong-eem*—"unwillingness to take responsible action." *Much more research needs to be done on this group of women, and on their*

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*Analysis is underway which will control for variables such as age and education, which might account for the difference between members and nonmembers.

TABLE 1. CURRENT FAMILY PLANNING STATUS*

Current Status	Members (N=446)	Non-Members (N=554)	Subtotal (N=1000)	Leaders (N=383)
Using Loops	18%	10%	13%	15%
Using Condoms	4	2	3	12
Using Oral Pills	11	9	10	16
Other Methods	13	7	9	24
PRACTICE RATE SUBTOTAL:	46%	28%	35%	67%
Pregnant	5	11	8	2
Want To Get Pregnant	13	25	20	3
*Pong-eem***	30	29	29	16
Recent Induced Abortion	0.2	0.9	0.6	0
N/A	6	6	7	12
TOTAL:	100%	100%	100%	100%

*From Park and Chung's Survey (1974, p. 166).

***Pong-eem* is a Korean word which means "not taking responsible action." In Table 1, it refers to women who do not want more children, but do not practice family planning.

neighbors who have already exceeded their own ideal family size but who want to have one more son. Many of the *pong-eems* may have relatively easy obstacles to overcome to get them to practice, such as a perceived inconvenience in going to a clinic, or a slight fear of certain methods. The village Mothers' Club should find it easy to help these *pong-eems* to adopt family planning. On the other hand, a substantial proportion of them may erroneouly think they they are infertile. To prove that they are fertile *before* they become pregnant and prime candidates for abortion, may be a difficult task that would require outside medical attention.

Because one of the main objectives of the Mothers' Club Program is to induce village mothers who successfully practice family planning to talk to others about their experiences, it is interesting to see just how many actually do this. According to the village census of eligible women, 52% have recommended family planning to their neighbors, and most of *these* women are Mothers' Club members. On the other hand, 67% of the total sample have been advised by someone else to practice family planning. Only 13% say that they have been advised not to practice, 11% have received both kinds of advice, and 9% claim that they have received no advice. Mothers' Club members are talking to more women about family planning than nonmembers, and much more favorable advice is given than unfavorable advice.

Prospects for the Future

After an estimated growth rate of 2.7% from 1955 until 1960 the population of the Republic of Korea had reached approximately 24.9 million (Cho, 1972). By 1966 the population had increased to 29.2 million, but the growth rate had declined somewhat to 2.4%. The official census for 1970 enumerated 31.5 million persons. After adjusting the 1970 census for underenumeration Cho (1972, p.4) estimated the annual growth rate from 1966 to 1970 at 2.1 to 2.2%. These figures show that the highest growth rate occurred during the post-Korean War period, particularly from 1958 until it began falling in the early 1960's. The implication are obvious: Korea will soon face a dramatic increase in the total number of married women in their most fertile childbearing years.

The age composition pyramid based on the 1970 census shows a dramatic increase for those between the ages of 10 and 14; that is, for those born from 1956 to 1960. The age group with the highest fertility rate consists of women from 25 to 29 years of age. This is consistent with most recent estimates of the average age of marriage for Korean women, 23 years. Where does this leave the large post-war cohort of men and women today (1974)? Many of them are now leaving the formal, public educational system and looking for their first full-time employment. On the average, most of the women will get married between 1979 and 1983. This first large post-war group will be in their most fertile childbearing years from 1985 until 1989.

The most critical question facing the Korean family planning program becomes: *What will these young people do after they marry and begin forming their own families?* KIFP's survey in 1973 revealed that the average number of lifetime births per woman (from 1971-1973) was 4.3. The current net reproduction rate (NRR) of 1.82 still has to be reduced by 45% to reach the replacement level (NRR=1). Using available estimates of the NRR 1965 (which has been declining), Chang, et al. (1974), estimate that the replacement level will be reached between the years 2001 and 2032. If this goal is achieved by the year 2001, then the ultimate stable population of Korea would be about 81 million people. If the level is not reached until the year 2032, then the population will level off at 117 million. This difference, of course, is not trivial.

Cho's (1973) most plausible population projections for the year 2000 place Korea's population between 54 and 57 million people. Korea is already one of the most densely populated countries in the world, especially in its rural areas. Without substantial changes in the rural economic sector, most of Korea's population growth will have to be absorbed by the cities.

> This means that in the year 2000 some 34 to 39 million persons (or 70 percent of the total population) would live in the cities, compared with 13.6 million (or 43 percent) in 1970. Urban and metropolitan growth of this magnitude would have serious social, economic, political, and environmental implications (Cho, 1973, p. 25).

The rapid rate urbanization and industrialization which occurred from 1960 to 1970 has already caused considerable social and economic disruption, as well as negative environmental impact. The government's New Village Movement is a response to this problem. To avoid even more severe problems will require a fundamental change in the attitudes and values of Korea's young people *before* they enter into their most fertile years.

There is evidence that some change has been occurrin[illegible]er-age ideal family size for women from 40 to 44 years of a[illegible] dren. The ideal for women from 35 to 39 is 3.9. Wome[illegible] twenty's consider 3.4 children to be ideal today (Moon et [illegible] In general, the ideal family size is much lower for urban women [illegible] than it is for rural women (3.5) of all ages. The majority of families prefer an ideal family of two sons and one daughter. And finally, there have been some very positive changes recently in the legal status of women. The 1973 maternal and child health law broadened the grounds for legal abortion and permitted trained midwives and nurses to insert IUD's. National women's organizations are continuing their pressure for changes in the inheritance laws and other regulations which favor men over women.

Although the preferred number of children is declining, it will probably take considerable effort to get young people to stop having children after they have had two, especially if those first two children are daughters. The following discussion of the successful Mothers' Club should be interpreted within the context of these basic demographic facts: high rural population density, rapid migration to urban areas, an unusually large group of young people who are now approaching their most fertile years, and a preferred ideal family size which is above the replacement level.

2

THE "MIRACLE" OF ORYU LI'S MOTHERS' CLUB

*We have to learn from rapidly changing systems. Ordinarily we learn from stable systems.**

Kenneth Boulding

Introduction

The history of the Mothers' Club Program, the current demographic situation of Korea, and the research findings that were discussed in the first section of this report, will be understood much more clearly and appreciated after we have looked at what one very successful Mothers' Club has accomplished since its beginning in 1968. Based on numerous positive reports that it had received from the field, the Planned Parenthood Federation of Korea (PPFK) invited us to visit the small village of Oryu *Li* in order to conduct a case study of their Mothers' Club.

Oryu *Li* is located in Songsoo *Myon*, ImSil *Kun*, about forty minutes by automobile from Jeon Ju City, the provincial capital of Jeon Ra Bug *Do*. At first, Oryu *Li* seems very typical of many of the villages in this part of Korea. But in many respects it has always been rather atypical of the "average" rural village. Historically, it has always been one of the *poorest* villages in Korea because of its small landholdings; today, through the efforts of its Mothers' Club, it is well on its way to becoming one of the *richest* villages in Korea. However, it represents what is *possible* for other villages regardless of their existing material resources *if* they can improve their level of cooperation, organization, and leadership.

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*Quoted from *Human Organization*, 21, 1962, p. 162.

All of the information here was collected during four days in July of 1973, and in a follow-up visit in August, 1974. Four experienced female interviewers from the School of Public Health, Seoul National University, lived in the village during this week and conducted intensive interviews with both active and inactive members of the Mothers' Club and their husbands. The authors also conducted interviews with the family planning fieldworker and the PPFK promoter assigned to Oryu *Li*, and with key government officials and health officials on the township, county, and provincial levels.*

Although interview protocols were used for many of the interviews to insure that the resulting information was both comprehensive and comparable across respondents, the most insightful information was collected by the four interviewers who stayed overnight in the village. On the first night, before beginning their planned interviews, they stayed up quite late singing songs and engaging in very informal discussion with a group of Mothers' Club members in the leader's house. Fortunately, during much of these discussions they left a cassette tape recorder playing and captured many of the crucial stories and humorous anecdotes that are described here as the seventeen critical events in the development of the Oryu *Li* Mothers' Club.

The Village of Oryu Li

> A fellow with an ax is no
> match for one with a needle.**

To the outside observer, Oryu *Li* seems typical of most of the surrounding rural villages, with its cluster of 103 houses (about 520 inhabitants), snuggled tightly between the community rice paddy and the slopes at the base of the mountains. Most houses have traditional thatched roofs, but enough are gradually being replaced with more durable tile roofs that there is the physical appearance of change and development. Two features, however, do distinguish Oryu *Li* from its

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*The two authors who did not speak Korean, conducted their interviews with the assistance of the Korean authors, or of one of the interviewers who spoke English.
**Traditional Korean proverb: "Unless the axman dares wield his mighty ax, he must surrender to the needlewoman" (Ha, T.H., *Guide to Korean Culture*, Yonsei University Press, Seoul, Korea, 1968, p. 363).

neighboring villages. There are a small bell tower and a cross that distinguish the small Presbyterian church from the other buildings. And next to the railroad tracks that run along the other side of the small rice paddy a small train depot and soldiers' station are located.

The villagers used the train tracks and depot as an illustration of how traditional their village once was. The geographical shape of the area formed by the river and surrounding mountains give the appearance of the Chinese character for "fire,"

When the train tracks were being laid, many villagers turned down the proposal to build a station next to their village because they thought the coming trains would "set the surrounding forest on fire." Others argued more successfully, however, that when the trains came they would "lift the village up like fire and make them rich." How the final decision was reached was not made clear, but many were quick to point out that a neighboring village thought that the trains would bring evil ghosts who would destroy their village. This village still has no train station, and the villagers must walk to Oryu *Li* to get the train. Both villages were very conservative and traditional. Some of the leaders of Oryu *Li* just interpreted the situation differently.*

Their interpretation is still open to question. Oryu *Li* was one of the poorest villages from the poorest township in Jeon Ra Bug *Do* Province. The average land holding per household was only half of the average 0.9 hectares per household for the province as a whole. Because it was so poor, many of the young girls in the village had to leave for the city to look for jobs as housekeepers or factory workers, and many young men were forced to leave for better jobs in the city. Most youths did not go to high school because they could not afford it. It is this level of poverty that makes the achievements of their Mothers' Club so impressive to those who learn about it. They are a model village for the rest of ImSil *Kun*, and through the Governor's unexpected visit, for the entire province as well.

The village social structure has been dominated by one family clan. Of the 103 households, 80 are members of the *Kang* family clan. There are 11 *Yoo* clan households, and 3 from the *Kim* clan, and so forth.

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*It is both ironic and a credit to traditional logic that both interpretations had some degree of truth. The modern influences that came with the trains had both the capacity to destroy village life as it was known, *and* to increase individual wealth.

According to Mr. Chang, husband of the present Mothers' Club leader and the man who was once chief of the township . . .

> This village was once well-known for its lack of cooperation, because of the tight family clan system and its location next to the train station. But now because of the Mothers' Club activities there is much better cooperation today. The leader had to work very hard to accomplish this by (1) enlightening village women who did not understand the advantages of cooperation, and (2) by minimizing the importance of clan membership for village improvement.

The existence of a tightly controlled clan system meant that if anyone suggested anything threatening to the existing clan, they would be criticized severely and treated harshly by clan members. A very serious mistake during the war with North Korea undoubtedly undermined their community cohesion. During the occupation by North Korean troops, one of the leaders became a member of the Communist Party. The North Koreans told him what to do and he enrolled all of the Kang's family members in the party. When the area was later reconquered by the South Korean forces, many people were killed, and the police and military have placed a close watch on the village ever since. Consequently, many of the Kang leaders have been afraid of holding any kind of meeting in the village. This made it especially difficult to organize the Mothers' Club after its founding in 1968.

The Historical Development of the Oryu Li *Mothers' Club*

The "miracle" of the Mothers' Club in Oryu *Li* did not occur overnight. It is more accurate to say that it evolved over a period of three years, and that it reached its present level of cohesion and activity only after considerable struggle and much personal sacrifice by many of its members. By looking at the events that occurred during the last three years, it is possible to identify the pattern of actions and reactions that eventually strengthened the group. These events will be discussed later as a series of problems and resolutions. Most of the events were too mild to be referred to as crises, but there is no question that many of them created the same degree of stimulation and opportunity for growth attributed usually to crisis events.

In order to underscore the succession from one problem to another, each activity or event is numbered in its approximate order of

occurrence. In some cases it was difficult to get the exact dates, and some events overlapped in time. Nevertheless, for purposes of analysis, it is useful to treat these as a series of interdependent events leading up to the present state of the club. These events and activities provide valuable insights into the processes of group development, leadership, and change in sex-specific role behavior which will be discussed later.

The reconstruction of these events was accomplished with information gathered from interviews with several members of the club. In the discussion that follows, their statements will be used occasionally to relate these events from their own points of view.

1. Formal Organization (March 3, 1968)

The Oryu *Li* Mothers' Club was founded with a visit by the *Myon* Secretary, acting in response to a request by the PPFK Promoter. It is not unusual to initiate a club formally in just one meeting, and this in part explains why over 12,000 clubs were established in the first year. Oryu *Li* is probably typical of many clubs organized in 1968. The secretary asked the *Li* Chief to organize a Mothers' Club, and he in turn appointed his own wife, Mrs. Choi Yang Soon as the Club's leader. Together they gathered the village women who were interested, and persuaded them to organize a Mothers' Club.

The Mothers' Club was established by *ten* original members who somehow managed to relinquish their household duties to their parents in order to meet once a month. Their first activities were to enlighten the members about family planning and to begin saving rice to earn money for their credit union, whose initial purpose was to further their children's education and repay their old debts. These first ten members were the "leading figures of the village," those who "live more comfortably and have a higher education," (Mrs. Choi).

The founding of the Club was much easier than its organization. The women encountered problems immediately. Because of the village's earlier problems with the communists during the war, many older villagers were still wary of any new meetings. And, of course, these were *women* holding the meetings.

2. Initial Problems: Early Leadership

The first leader of the club was Mrs. Choi Yang Soon, wife of

the *Li* Chief Kang Sin-Hang, who appointed her.* They have two sons and one daughter. Because Mrs. Choi only graduated from primary school, one of the first goals she set for the Mothers' Club was better education for their children. Mrs. Choi's own children did very well in school, and one of her children was ranked third of 120 in his school. The example set by her encouragement of her own children, and their subsequent success, helped to convince other members of the importance of education and the importance of their support for their children.

During the early years of the Club, the older men of the village gossiped and criticized its activities. Many parents-in-law did not understand, nor approve of, the purpose of the Mothers' Club, so some members experienced very difficult situations at home. At first, they were ashamed of participating in the meetings, and at times met secretly for fear that their parents-in-law and husbands would object openly to their meetings. Mrs. Choi herself was often reproached by village elders because of their past memories and their disapproval of women attending meetings outside the home.

Their early meetings were not without problems either. Mrs. Kang, who is now one of the work group leaders, recalled how ". . . difficult (it was) to unify many different opinions about how to collect funds to establish a cooperative store in the village.** There were also many different opinions about the quantity of grain each member should save in the credit union." Many of the members interviewed remembered how hard it was to begin raising money for the club. Mrs. Choi also felt that it was much more difficult to manage a small amount of savings, because when loans were made some did not repay them.

How did they ever get past these early obstacles? They did this by setting the best example possible with their club activities. First, Mrs. Choi demonstrated incredible insight with a plan to gain community support that was both acceptable and compatible with traditional village norms. She encouraged the other members, at their meetings, to show *more* respect to their elders, in-laws, and husbands than they were accustomed, and to treat them *better* than nonmembers of the club in the village. Then they decided as a group to persuade their families of the

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*In Korean the family name is given first followed by one's given names; when a woman marries, she continues to use her own family name.

**This was translated literally for us as "public selling agency," where prices are reasonable and profits return to the members.

value of the club by preparing and serving especially delicious foods and providing entertainment twice every month (on the first and fifteenth). They made sure that this new behavior was recognized as one of the activities of the Mothers' Club. As Mrs. Kang Sang-Ryae explains, "In the past our husbands mistook the Mothers' Club for 'women's liberation'. But now they understand it . . . we persuaded them by serving them various delicious foods and entertainment."

In effect, what they did was try to show that the club's purpose was to make them better mothers, wives, and daughters-in-law; and *not* solely better for themselves, but also for the rest of the community. In Mrs. Chang Won-Soon's words, "My husband now praises the Mothers' Club because it has done many things for our village. He said it should have been formed earlier. The elders also approve . . . my father-in-law says, 'It's good and interesting to see my daughter-in-law is working so hard.' " This tactic to obtain community support should *not* be mistaken for a superficial form of co-optation. It was a sincere decision by the club to dedicate themselves to improving relations in their homes and community. Anything short of this would probably have failed. It has not been completely successful; a few old men still object to the club. Their emphasis upon improving interpersonal relationships was continued by the second leader in 1971, and the special meals and increased respect for husbands and elders continues to be an important activity of the Mothers' Club.

The members were united by visiting everyone's house, and by stressing that their mutual fund was for all the members to use, and therefore, the duty of each to repay. They all promised to help each other during emergencies. This was a meager effort by a very poor village to save money. It was done with an immediate objective of having small, emergency loans available; an intermediate objective of establishing a cooperative store to save money on small goods like soap, socks, etc.; and a long-range goal of better education for their children. At that time, they would have been incapable of believing that within 4-5 years they would have accumulated over 600,000 *won* (US $1,500), and that some of their husbands would be talking about borrowing from the Mothers' Club to start a village factory.

3. *The Gift of the Family Planning Pig*

Between 1968 and 1970 the main activities of the club were

(1) learning and practicing family planning, (2) fulfilling their duties to their husbands and elders, and (3) attempting to accumulate funds for cooperative projects. Although all three of these activities were based upon group consensus, the kind of response required of each member was basically individual. Up to this point the club had not undertaken a joint project requiring *coordinated action* by several members at the same time (with the exception of club meetings) to achieve a mutual goal. Then in 1971 the Provincial PPFK Office gave a rather unusual prize to one Mothers' Club in each of the thirteen *kuns* (counties) in Jeon Ra Bug *Do*: a piglet.* The purpose of this gift was to stimulate potential clubs to undertake joint livestock projects to increase their income. Oryu *Li's* Mothers' Club was awarded the piglet in ImSil *Kun*, and, as they now admit, the gift caused an immediate problem for their club.

Where would they keep the piglet? Who would feed and take care of it? What would they do with it once it had matured? Who would benefit? At first the women had no idea about how to proceed, but after meeting to discuss the problem they finally worked out a plan to care for the piglet and then to breed it later to increase the club's general fund. They noted with considerable pride that of the thirteen piglets awarded, only theirs and one other survived (or was not sold immediately by the recipient club).

From the standpoint of club development, this project was successful, but from the standpoint of livestock production the results are somewhat equivocal. To date, their pig has produced two litters: two female piglets in the first litter, followed by two male piglets in the second litter. Because most pigs usually produce considerably larger litters (4-7 piglets) than this, their pig soon achieved local renown as the "family planning pig of Oryu *Li*." The pig was accused of taking PPFK's family planning slogan too seriously: "Girl or boy, stop at two and rear them well." After two litters (by 1973), they are now considering selling the pig, but continuing with their livestock project.

4. Second Phase: A New Leader (1971)

Mrs. Chung Moon Ja and her husband, Chang Young, were living in a mountain valley about two kilometers from Oryu *Li* during the first three years of the Mothers' Club. Every time they went to JeonJu, the

*The actual gift was 7,000 *won* with which to purchase a piglet for the club.

provincial capital, they stopped at Oryu *Li* for a short rest, and Mrs. Chung soon became good friends with Mrs. Choi, the club leader. They often discussed the problems of the club, and as Mrs. Chung had graduated from high school in JeonJu City, her advice and suggestions were often used by Mrs. Choi.

Mr. Chang worked as the *Myon* Chief for almost twenty years before he quit to devote full time to his dairy farm. He and his wife had planned to save their money and move to Seoul so that they would have greater opportunity to educate their children. However, after their dairy project failed this plan was no longer feasible, so they decided to settle in Oryu *Li* which, at least, had better access to local schools. Mrs. Choi soon asked Mrs. Chung to become the formal leader of the Mothers' Club. At first she was very reluctant to take over because she still felt like an outsider in Oryu *Li*. Neither she nor her husband were members of the Kang clan.

Mrs. Choi persuaded her finally to be their leader by stressing that she would continue as assistant leader. Mrs. Chung's reservations were soon confirmed by resistance, hostility, and criticism from some members of the Kang family clan. Once, while Mrs. Chung was receiving training in Seoul from PPFK, a local newspaper published an article about Oryu *Li's* previous involvement with the Communists during the war. Suspecting that Mrs. Chung had told the reporter about the incident during an interview, the villagers were extremely angry with her. When she returned from Seoul they all went to blame her for the bad publicity. She denied any connection, and swore that she had never been interviewed. After much persuasion she finally convinced most of them that the reporter had acted without interviewing anyone.

A similar incident occurred when some villagers were involved in making illegal connections to a nearby electric power line. When this was discovered and corrected by the government, Mrs. Chung was accused of reporting them to a visiting government worker. She objected strongly, and when the village finally learned that she had been falsely accused, they became sympathetic, lowered their resistance, and began to cooperate with her.

Mrs. Chung took the initiative as soon as possible. She visited county and provincial government officials and persuaded them to visit Oryu *Li* to encourage the Mothers' Club. She renewed the club's commitment to improve community relations and increase respect for the elders. She persuaded the five village elders who most opposed the club

to serve as official consultants/advisors (*komun*) for Mothers' Club activities. This move apparently diminished much of their opposition, but without any significant increase in their interference with the club. And at times, the club found that it needed help on some tasks that men have more experience with than women do. Finally, she persuaded the club to make *kim chee* (pickled cabbage, a staple of Korean diet) for the soldiers stationed on the other side of the train tracks, and to distribute drugs to them for roundworms. The club would soon benefit from all of these early moves by their new leader.

5. The School Uniforms Project: A New Approach

The first time that Mrs. Chung gathered the members for a meeting, she articulated the *five general goals* which their Mothers' Club should strive for:

(1) Family Planning
(2) Village Improvement
(3) Love for Korea (patriotism)
(4) Love for their Neighbors
(5) Love for God

After their general consensus had been given, she suggested that they concentrate first on increasing their savings fund.

Mrs. Chung recognized that even though the members knew that saving was good, they were just too poor to contribute very much each month. So when she heard about an annual athletic meet to be held at the middle school that summer (1971), she thought of a way they might be able to *make* some extra money. She met with the middle-school teachers and offered to have the Mothers' Club make and sell uniforms for the children for their meet this year. The teachers readily agreed. She bought the materials they needed in JeonJu City, and the mothers of Oryu *Li* made uniforms. The financial profit of this endeavor was 6,000 *won;* they donated half of that to the school for their sports meet. Mrs. Chung encouraged the other members to save their share of the 3,000 *won* in the credit union.

This was a small project, but besides the good publicity it earned them in the school and in nearby villages, it probably served to convince them that they were capable of *creating* ways to increase their savings.

The new leader's first project earned her the extra amount of respect that she needed to gain their full cooperation.

6. *A Step Up: The New Credit Union*

After their success with the school uniforms, Mrs. Chung was more confident that they could increase their savings if they worked together on it. Before the annual harvest, she proposed that they start a new Mothers' Club Credit Union for their village. This would require their opening an account with the Agricultural Cooperative Bank, and learning the correct procedures for deposits, withdrawals, and bookkeeping. She proposed that they all save 100 *won* (US $0.25) per month in order to accrue the fund. At first some members wanted to use this like a traditional *kye*, but they soon decided to maintain this fund for their children's future educational expenses.

They were accustomed to paying 6% interest per month for use of *kye* funds, so Mrs. Chung proposed that they lower this to 3% per month and argued that the purpose is *use* by their own members, *not* profit. They also decided to increase their rice savings to one *twe* (about one liter) per month.

Then Mrs. Chung proposed a substantial change in the *scale* of their club's operations. At that time, the ten club members had accumulated only 9,900 *won* in their fund (US $25). She proposed that they increase the membership of the club and begin investing their funds in money-making projects (trade/commerce) so that their fund would increase more rapidly. At first the original ten members objected to her plan, claiming that the 9,900 *won* belonged to them, and should not be used by new members. Resistance to open membership may have been based on social factors as well as financial, but Mrs. Chung concentrated first on the dilemma caused by the fund. Finally, she just said, "Okay, you take all your money out of the fund, and I'll loan the fund 10,000 *won* of my own money to get it started." This response made quite an impression on the members. Mrs. Kang Sang-Ryae remembered it well, "... all the members were greatly moved by her unselfish act and paid their money voluntarily." The club soon grew to 41 members.

To begin the operation of the small cooperative store they estimated that they would need at least 50,000 *won* (US $125). After Mrs. Chung's unselfish offer, the group decided to work together in their free time (often by working at dawn) harvesting rice on neighboring farms

for 4,000 *won* each per day.* This was the quickest way to raise the money they needed, but with some cost to their regular household duties. They soon had raised 120,000 *won* by working in the harvest together, and their cooperative store became a reality. Eventually, the club actually took control of one of the two village wine houses for this store.

7. *The Family Planning Crisis*

There is a general consensus in the Mothers' Club today that women are "deeply injured through giving birth to many children," and that "having fewer children and educating them well is much better" (from general discussion of members). Many regret that they learned about modern contraceptives so late, but they are glad that the younger women will be able to have fewer children. According to the club members, *all* of the club's eligible women (now 53) are now practicing some form of contraception. This is a dramatic change from the conditions that existed before the Mothers' Club was organized in 1968.

A few years before the club, women who adopted family planning had to do it in secret, often concealing the fact even from their own husbands, for fear that if discovered they might be beaten to death. There were reports of a woman in another part of the province who was beaten to death by her husband for practicing family planning secretly. The first family planning fieldworker who visited Oryu *Li* was criticized severely by some of the village men.** The first women to practice contraceptive measures in Oryu *Li* were ashamed; they still thought that it was indecent, and they were afraid of their husbands' reactions. Nurses who visited the village had to work secretly, and there were often many unexplained side effects. The early leaders tried to persuade others through discussions in their homes, but it was difficult to distinguish those who accepted from those who opposed family planning because everyone was afraid to talk about it openly.

By 1970, the Mothers' Club leader and other members had been successful in persuading many village women to practice family planning. The oral pill, first introduced in the Korean program in 1968, was used

*At approximately 200 *won* (US $0.50) per day, it would require 20 members to make this amount. Women are generally paid about half the daily wage that men receive.

**One woman said, "beaten" by some village men.

by several women in Oryu *Li*. Then one of the women who first accepted the pill became seriously ill from its side effects and "almost died." Thirteen other women immediately discontinued use of the pill, and by 1971 when Mrs. Chung became the club's leader there were many unwanted new babies in the village.* Although it was never mentioned, this may have been one of the reasons that Mrs. Choi wanted her to become their leader. One of Mrs. Chung's first priorities was to restore their faith in "scientific" family planning.

While she was attending a seminar in JeonJu City for Mothers' Club leaders, she was so moved by two guest lecturers that she pleaded with them afterwards to speak to her village about the ill effects, and to teach the women about alternative methods of contraception. When they agreed to come she gathered all of the people in the village and also invited the leaders of other Mothers' Clubs in the *Myon*. They were told that oral pills were not to be used by people who had any of four kinds of physical conditions, and that this was why the woman in their village had such extreme ill effects. Other methods were explained, and the women were encouraged to try the loop method if they still felt uneasy about oral pills. Then following her own emotional appeal, Mrs. Chung asked all those who were willing to go to JeonJu City to get loops to raise their hands. Eighteen mothers volunteered to try the loop.

When they went to JeonJu City for clinic service, only twelve actually received the loop; the other six came at the wrong point in their menstrual cycle. One of the twelve women was never convinced completely that loops are safe, and she suffered ill effects. Mrs. Chung suspected that this severe reaction was due partly to the woman's fear, so while she was attending a seminar for leaders in Seoul she wrote to her three times to reassure her. When she returned she learned that the woman was still emotionally upset; Mrs. Chung loaned her 3,000 *won* from the credit union and accompanied her to the clinic to have the loop removed. She later apologized to the other club members for persuading someone to accept a loop against her will. Fortunately, there were no problems for the other volunteers.

This crisis, and the stories that many remember about it, underscores the primary function that a mothers' club can serve. *The Mothers' Club program formally legitimizes a local organization that can mobilize its own, and external, resources to solve village problems.* This example

*By their count, 12 of these 13 women became pregnant during the following year.

also illustrates that in rural Korea the visit to a clinic to adopt family planning may be accomplished more readily by a *collective group decision;* from a Western perspective such behavior is assumed to require an individual decision.

Official descriptions of the Korean program usually report how successful Mothers' Clubs have been as channels of distribution for oral pills and family planning information. This one example from Oryu *Li,* however, reveals what may be an even more important contribution: *the personal follow-up and support by members for the mothers who try a method for the first time, or who experience problems and are considering discontinuing family planning.* There is no way that doctors, nurses, or fieldworkers can possibly provide the highly personal, concerned support that Mrs. Chung gave to her neighbor in Oryu *Li.* Informal social networks might provide similar support, but by formally organizing a mothers' club this important function becomes an explicit responsibility of the leader and other members of the club. Their meetings provide a place and time to do it.

8. The Kitchen Improvement Project

An official from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare said at a training session in Seoul that women should take responsibility for keeping their village environment clean. One suggestion was to clean the food storage places by taking the traditional *kim chee* jars off the ground and storing them on concrete stands. Oryu *Li's* Mothers' Club initiated this project in February (1972), but soon they turned their attention to improving their kitchens. They decided to modernize their kitchens by rebuilding their cooking stands and stoves with concrete bricks. Each kitchen required six to seven bags of cement plus sand; they estimated that about 100,000 *won* were required to do the kitchens of all 41 club members. They met every day until they could devise a plan to raise the money.

Finally, Mrs. Chung suggested that they each donate their gold rings, and wait to be repaid when they received the profit on their chestnut trees (see next item). "There is no reason to wear gold rings when our environment is dirty and needs to be improved," argued Mrs. Chung. She had already sold most of her own wedding presents for home improvement projects. Once again moved by their leader's logic, the younger women donated their gold rings. The older members, like Mrs.

Chung, no longer had their rings to give. During the meeting they were unconcerned about being repaid later, but they began to worry about the reaction of their husbands and parents-in-law. Finally, they decided it would be best to keep their donations secret until they were paid back. All the rings together totaled 56 grams, or about 80,000 *won*.

Once they had the cement they divided themselves into eight work teams of 5 members each to make bricks early in the morning. The first set of bricks froze and broke apart the next day. It was either too cold, or they were poorly mixed. Next, they invited men in the village who were more skilled to work with each work team, under an agreement that they would be exempt from other New Village Movement duties. They found that other New Village Movement projects had depleted the available supply of sand. As they had helped the soldiers the year before, they were able to persuade them to use their two trucks to transport sand from the river bed. After they had made over 2,000 bricks, they gave the soldiers a new batch of *kim chee* as a reward.

9. The Chestnut Tree Nursery: Hope for the Future

Early in 1972, Mrs. Chung heard that the Government was promoting a reforestation campaign by making available seeds and seedlings for New Village Movement projects. She visited the Chief of ImSil *Kun* to see if the Mothers' Club could also obtain some seedlings. After briefing the *Kun* Chief on their entire activity plan for 1972, she told him that their village had very little land for cultivation, but that they could use their surrounding hills for trees. Would he support them? He was skeptical at first because the ground was still hard from the winter and he doubted whether women would be able to dig the holes deep enough for the seedlings. Mrs. Chung was persistent, and he finally promised them 2,000 chestnut seedlings.

The other members of the club were overjoyed to hear the good news. In their enthusiasm they dug each hole 100 centimeters deep in the still-frozen hillside, even though 60 centimeters would have been enough. They expected that 2,000 trees would require, ". . . at least two days, but they were so eager that they finished in one day.* People in

*The club leader corrected these figures later: digging the holes and transplanting the trees took five days, the fertilizer another three. Although this quote may just refer to digging the holes, eight days for the whole job is still a remarkable achievement.

the surrounding villages could not believe such a feat was possible. They accused the soldiers of helping them dig the holes during the previous night. The women were unperturbed, and attributed this rumor to the soldiers' help with the sand the year before. The most difficult part came later—carrying the fertilizer up the hillside on their heads. Eight days after beginning, their task was completed.

At current prices they calculated that they would gross 600,000 *won* when the chestnut saplings were large enough to transplant to permanent sites (300 *won* times 2,000 seedlings). This was too good to be true! They decided to try planting chestnut seeds on a level plot of land adjacent to their rice paddy. In order to accomplish this chestnut tree nursery more efficiently, Mrs. Chung organized a Young Men's Club (formally organized as a 4-H Club) with 15 village men under age 30. She appealed to them by saying that President Park had made chestnut trees one of his highest priorities for the New Village Movement, and she loaned them 20,000 *won* from the Mothers' Club Credit Union which they could ". . . easily repay by working on side jobs." When the profit comes, they plan to donate 200,000 *won* to the village savings fund, and then divide the rest among the members of the Mothers' Club and the Young Men's Club. By the summer of 1973, thousands of new seedlings had taken root in their nursery, and had already reached a height of 30-50 centimeters. At 100 *won* per seedling, it is easy to understand why the chestnut trees have become "their greatest hope for the future and for the education of their children."

10. Barley and Peony: Crops for Cash

After the chestnut trees were transplanted, the club members turned to planting the spring barley crop. Because no extra land was available, they decided to create their own. They persuaded the soldiers to transport 10 truckloads of extra topsoil to construct a new plot of land by the river bed in front of the village. They planted late, so only half of their crop was good. Then because of poor storage during the rainy season (July-August), another part was lost. When they finally took the remaining crop to the government purchasing agency (Agricultural Cooperative), it was rejected for being too damp to measure and store. They asked that an exception be made for Mothers' Club grain, and requested more time to dry it again.

When they returned to the village, they divided the club into three work groups:

(1) To enlighten the other villagers about the dual price system—with a fixed price for grain sold to government buyers to prevent loss to the farmer due to fluxuation in supply and demand.

(2) To work together to dry their barley more thoroughly.

(3) To take the barley to market again, because (a) when men do it for them they usually spend the afternoon drinking, and (b) to check for themselves the regulations and standards for selling grain to the government buyers.

When they finally tried again, some of their grain still failed the standard test, but they sold it eventually for a lower price. Although these problems made the project only partially successful, most of the members were satisfied with their effort. They know that they are better prepared for the next growing season.

FROM CASTOR-OIL TO PEONY

Meanwhile they decided to plant on an abandoned hill behind their village and planted beans and wild sesame. As many guests were now visiting their club, they picked wild strawberries to make wine. Now completely out of space, they turned to the right-of-way along the railroad tracks and planted castor-oil seeds for about 4 kilometers, added fertilizer, and toiled very hard together. Then a railroad beautification campaign came through and all of their castor-oil plants were up-rooted before their pleas to the governor could be heard.

Angry, but not discouraged, they decided to work harder on other things. They turned to peony cultivation. One peony root was worth at least 300 *won* for use as Chinese herbal medicine in nearby cities. The government agricultural agency refused their application for seeds because they did not have a community garden. So they bought enough seeds for each member to grow four or five roots in their own small flower beds. Eventually, they plan to buy a community plot for intensive peony cultivation.

11. Surprise Visit: The Governor of Jeon Ra Bug Province

Early one morning, Mrs. Chung heard an announcement on the radio that the Provincial Governor would be visiting certain villages in ImSil *Kun*, but *not* Oryu *Li*. The purpose of the tour was to reward successful New Village Movement projects. Their village was very disappointed, but then very surprised when one of the governor's cars showed up that same afternoon in their village. As it turned out, the governor was very disappointed with the projects he had seen during the morning. When he asked if there were any good mothers' clubs nearby, someone recommended Oryu *Li*.

The governor's advance man arrived early and told Mrs. Chung to gather all the women for a meeting–the governor wanted to talk to them. She objected, ". . .the women are working in the field, not dressed for a meeting . . . why don't we get the fertilizer and have them putting it on the chestnut trees when the governor arrives?" They did that, and the governor was impressed to see them working so hard together. Then the governor and Mrs. Chung returned to her house where she briefed him on the club's activities.

The "briefing" lasted for over two hours, very unusual for this kind of a visit. Mrs. Chung, however, is not the usual kind of village leader. During these two hours she described the problems and activities of their club from its beginning to the present. Her exposition was so intensely emotional that the governor was actually moved to tears at one point. As he explained to us later, it was the first time he had wept in forty years, but it was from a feeling of gladness (*Kam kyuk*) for what they had been able to accomplish with so little. According to Mrs. Chung, she was so excited to be talking to the governor that her heart began to beat abnormally fast ". . . for at least two months afterwards." During her excitement she emphasized two main points:

(1) The cooperative projects of the Mothers' Club.
(2) The need for women's education, and education for their children.

Before he left, the governor toured the village and then donated 300 bags of cement and twenty towel sets as gifts for the members of the Mothers' Club. He complimented the Oryu *Li* club at the next provincial meeting of *Kun* Chiefs, and encouraged the chiefs to visit this

club to learn how to improve those in their own counties. Some time later the Chief of Iksan *Kun* visited Oryu *Li* with his wife. The organization of Mothers' Clubs in his county soon became recognized among the best in the province "... because they are modeled after the Oryu *Li* Mothers' Club." Other county chiefs visited the club, and the county chief gave his full support to Oryu *Li* as the model village for the county to emulate.*

During our visit, the governor told us that he had visited over 1,000 villages (of the 6,644) during the year in order to encourage village development. He was so impressed with Oryu *Li* because he considers reclamation of unused land and reforestation as high priorities for the province. He recounted the club's school uniform project almost verbatim, stressing that their village fund had grown to 408,000 *won* by the end of 1972. In his own words, "I have noticed many fantastic accomplishments by Women's Clubs. Their cooperation is great, and they work very hard ... even in heavy men's work, women can be effective. Mrs. Chung's target for the year 1973 is two million *won*; in my eyes, she's just crazy!" He added, "quite frankly" that he believes the New Village Movement is led by *women* rather than men. His province was the first to integrate the various types of women's groups in a village into a single village Women's Club for general development, and the only province to assign official *myon* (township) employees to work primarily with Women's Clubs. He finished our interview with the following statement:

> We have student power in Korea, which has become universal over the last few years. I think I am one of the few government officials, however, who recognizes that *women power* is so strong.

12. The Governor's Gift: A New Confrontation

Because the governor only had twenty towels to give, the Mothers' Club was immediately faced with an uncomfortable dilemma—how to divide the 20 towels among the 41 women? Everyone wanted one; any

*This publicity undoubtedly led to PPFK's selection of Oryu *Li* as the best successful club for us to study.

show of favoritism would have been disastrous. Mrs. Chung finally arrived at a solution. Any member who was willing to pay 100 *won* for a towel would receive one, and the profit of 2,000 *won* would go to the three poorest families in the village (enough for two bushels of barley per family). No one objected, and everyone felt good about the gift to the three families.

The cement presented a more serious problem. The governor had donated 300 sacks of cement, and the village men—especially the husbands of nonmember wives—immediately insisted that they be distributed to *everyone* in the village, *not* just to the members of the Mothers' Club. Mrs. Chung was summoned to a gathering of the village men in a nonmember's house. Her own husband had already arrived. The men claimed that the cement had been given to the whole village. The more they talked about the cement, the more Mrs. Chung resisted; she reminded them that ". . . even President Park would support only the active ones, *not* those who do nothing!" At that moment an ingenious idea occurred to her: she volunteered to share the cement with all members of the Women's Club, *even those who joined now.* "We'll gladly share the cement with any of your wives who join the club," she told them. Obviously outsmarted, they left the meeting deadlocked with Mrs. Chung's compromise.

After this incident, there were awkward feeling in the village between the club members and nonmembers. Mrs. Chung's offer, however, gave club members the upper hand. Only their husbands' stubbornness would prevent the nonmember wives from joining the Womens' Club and benefiting from the Governor's gift. The members realized that the nonmembers had to stay home to attend to their own households rather than participate in New Village Movement projects. They began to feel sorry for their own husbands who had to do without them so much during the year. They wanted to hold a special dinner as a tribute for their husbands, but the New Village Movement leader said a dinner party for Mothers' Club husbands only would further antagonize the feelings of the nonmembers' husbands. So they held a special dinner for the whole village. Relations returned to normal, and by July of 1973, club membership had grown to 53, increasing the number of villagers who could directly share in the benefits of the club.

13. Mothers' Club Anniversary Celebration

On September 1, 1972, the Oryu *Li* Mothers' Club held a special

ceremony to honor their club's achievements since Mrs. Chung had become the leader. Mrs. Chung visited the *Kun* Chief to see if he would prepare honorary certificates for the three work group leaders. She herself had been honored enough over the year, but these three had worked very hard without ever being recognized formally. The *Kun* Chief was very impressed, but he insisted that he attend their ceremony not only with certificates, but also with prizes. When Provincial government officials heard about this, they also sent three prizes to award the group leaders.

During the ceremony, Mrs. Chung reviewed all of the Mothers' Class accomplishments for the villagers of Oryu *Li*. Upon hearing so many outstanding achievements at once, the most resistant villagers discarded their earlier misconceptions and resistance to the Mothers' Club, and many publicly urged their own wives to become active in the club. After donating 3,000 *won* and working 12 days for the Mothers' Club fund, 13 new members joined. Mrs. Chung saved the three extra prizes donated by the provincial government until December, and then awarded them to the three members of the club who had saved their money in the credit union "most diligently" during the last year.

14. The Young Women's Club and Day-Care Nursery

During the long winter Mrs. Chung noticed one day that their cooperative store was frequently selling out of cookies. A quick investigation showed that young girls and boys (teenagers) were meeting at night to play cards and gamble for cookies. To put a stop to this "unsound gathering" she organized a Young Women's Club (*Sangkok Hue*, Evergreen Club). She told the 19 new members that they were too important to waste their free time. "Since we are too old all we could do was just try not to have too many children . . . but you are young and should learn scientific family planning in advance and build a happy married life." All of the girls followed her advice and arranged to meet on the fifteenth of every month. She proposed they save 100 *won* every month, and she taught them songs, recreational activities and home economics.

During the previous season, the Mothers' Club had tried to organize a nursery school for their children in the village church, but many problems had occurred. The children had damaged the church walls, so this year the women tried to hold it in Mrs. Chung's house. The children still could not be supervised properly and continued to misbehave.

Around 11:00 a.m. the children would scatter and disappear, hunting for their mothers in the fields to give them food. Mrs. Chung tried collecting second-hand toys to keep their attention, but the children paid more attention to the food.

Mrs. Chung asked the mothers to give their children a little money or food for their lunch, but most of the women said they could not send their children to the nursery if they had to send food too. She tried feeding them rice and bean milk, but this was not enough. This year some of the club members planted potatoes on a small plot of a nearby tobacco farm in exchange for helping the owner of the field with his tobacco crop. Both crops were successful and they harvested twenty bags of potatoes, one part for the participating members and the other for the children's nursery.

To solve the problem of supervision, the members of the Young Women's Club (*Sangkok Hue*) were asked to serve as teachers for the nursery school. After three days of training, Mrs. Chung's daughter became the nursery's first teacher. She soon discovered what a difficult job it was. The children had never experienced a group or classroom situation, so they tended to be disorderly and undisciplined. This problem reinforced what Mrs. Chung had been saying all along to other women in the village. It does little good just to educate your own children, ". . . to educate one's own children it is necessary to educate *all* of the neighbors' children to create a good educational climate."

The location for the nursery is still a problem because Mrs. Chung's house is not big enough for so many children. To build a Mothers' Club hall is one of the dreams of the members, but they do not think this will be possible until 1975. Mrs. Chung does not want to use any of their savings because it would disappoint many of the members. She plans to wait until after they receive the money from their chestnut trees before proposing that they build a hall of their own.

The need of the Mothers' Club for a nursery school reveals one of the most important lessons that the year's activities had taught them. The recurrent reason that women gave for *not* being able to participate in club projects was: *too many small children and too many responsibilities to care for at home.* In other words, once they had the opportunity to see what they were capable of doing outside the home, many of the club members and other village women began to realize that having too many children limits their freedom to engage in other activities. Family planning is now acknowledged as the best way to free themselves

to participate more fully in village development projects. This message has not gone unnoticed by their husbands.

The sequence of this learning process is crucial. No one practiced family planning initially in order to have more time to participate in activities outside the home. Very few activities were available. No family planning communication carried this specific message to help motivate village women to adopt family planning. Without some personal experience of their own with outside activities, it is doubtful that such a message would have had much impact. This message is more relevant today, however. In fact, it is one of the most prevalent arguments used by village women in their own interpersonal communication about family planning. The lesson derives from their own experience.

First, family planning was practiced for a variety of reasons by women who felt they had enough, or too many, children. The Mothers' Club encouraged and taught "scientific" family planning, then turned to village development and money-making projects. Without the burdens of pregnancy or very young infants many members were able "to find" more time (at dawn, for instance) to work on outside projects. Their enthusiasm and motivation to work on outside projects increased greatly with each success, and as the long range benefits, *especially their children's education,* became more and more feasible. It also became apparent that women with too many children, or too many very young children, did not have as much time to participate.

The twelve husbands and wives that we interviewed had an average of 4.3 children. All but one person said their daughter-in-law should have *only two* children. Seven respondents recommended two children regardless of their sex. Reasons for fewer children: childrearing difficulties, economic and educational problems, lack of space, desire for more comfort and wealth, less need for sons, and ". . . spare time and energy [for mothers] to act and work for their community" (Mrs. Chang). According to Mrs. Chang, when the club was first organized, ". . . I was pregnant and had many children at home; it was difficult to participate in every cooperative project."

At the time of this study, many villagers believed *for the first time* that they could improve the quality of life in their village, and that they could obtain more education for their children. And finally, to complete the circle, they can see clearly the relationship between family planning and these desires: more time for personal and village development, improved quality of life, and better education for their children.

Their direct experience with these factors has made this system of beliefs much more coherent and relevant than would have been possible beforehand. This conclusion is not necessarily "proven" by the evidence from this single case, but it is suggested strongly by the known order of events and the statements made by many of the Mothers' Club members at the time of this study.

15. From Mothers' Club Meetings to Mothers' Club School

In a typical Mothers' Club meeting, the leader usually reports all of her activities since the last monthly meeting, then the members discuss the current status of the credit union and other club projects and activities. In a recent meeting Mrs. Chung described her participation in a New Village Movement Contest held in Seoul, and then distributed the agricultural tools that she bought with the prize money she received there. She talked to the women about the loop and the proper way to take oral pills, informed them of other New Village Movement projects and women's leadership, and explained the meaning of their country's power and cooperative spirit. Sometimes she reads portions of PPFK's national magazine, *Happy Home.* Attendance is usually very high as they must pay a fine of 30 *won* if they miss a meeting (200 *won* for work projects).

When we asked what the *members* do at these meetings, we received the following responses:

(1) We hear the leader's opinion, give our own opinions, and make them one [i.e., reach consensus].

(2) Bring our rice for saving, express our opinions, and vote.

(3) We discuss our cooperative projects, turn in our rice savings, and learn songs.

(4) We listen to the leader and exchange our opinions about life with one another.

(5) We exchange our opinions about all our lives, and try to solve our problems or troubles in life.

(6) At the meetings, by speaking out about problems on our minds that worry us, we can attain greater peace of mind [originally translated as: feeling *catharsis* through verbalization].

Providing an outlet or an opportunity for individual and group "catharsis" is never mentioned as one of the functions of the Mothers' Club Program in Korea. The earlier reference to community, family, and interpersonal conflict and frustrations, as well as personal problems with contraceptives, suggests that in Oryu *Li* at least the Mothers' Club has served this function quite well. When asked about her personal benefits from the Mothers' Club, Mrs. Kang Sang-Ryae, one of the work group leaders, supported this inference:

> I learned to help others and to work cooperatively . . . I learned about various methods to improve my way of living. I came to understand my husband and our relationship became closer, as we always talk about the peaceful home at our meetings.

The very high degree of group solidarity and cohesiveness that this club has attained, and the tremendous amount of hard work and personal dedication of its members also suggest that the club has served a "therapeutic" function throughout its rather rapid development. It is possible that women in traditional Korean villages have no other outlets for self-expression besides their own peer groups.

Because so much of the monthly meetings of the club are taken up by club business, activity reports, or lectures by visitors, Mrs. Chung organized special classes one night each week in her own house. Those who are interested and have time attend these classes to learn about home economics, new agricultural technology, new "side jobs" to increase their family income by working at home, etc. The subjects of these classes are restricted only by their interests and the resources available for teaching. The other club members are dependent upon Mrs. Chung for these extra classes, limited only by her competence and "natural" skills as a teacher. These classes could be improved, and similar classes could be organized by other Mothers' Clubs, if more resources and learning materials were provided by PPFK and other development or educational organizations.

As Mrs. Chung is also the leader of the *Myon* (township) and *Kun* (county) Associations of Mothers' Club Leaders, she spends some of her time visiting other villages to advise and encourage their clubs. Her own club members support her visits to other villages, and learn from her reports of their activities. She refuses to accept government financial support for voluntary work in other communities, because she

feels that she would lose her sense of autonomy and credibility in the eyes of the villagers. For the same reason she has persuaded the other leaders in the *Myon* and *Kun* Associations to hold their meetings in each of their respective villages rather than in the office of the county government as some officials have requested. She maintains that if they meet at a central government office, they will soon be considered an "inconvenience" and ignored by government officials. By meeting in the villages, the government officials are always curious about what is happening and volunteer readily to attend a meeting or to send appropriate representatives.

16. A Factory for Oryu Li

In the fall of 1973, Mrs. Chung began looking in nearby cities for some way that the young girls from her village could work during the winter months to earn extra money for their future marriages. She finally found a factory that produced traditional silk belts for export to Japan. After visiting there four times, she succeeded in obtaining some materials to try weaving the belts in the village. At first the other villagers objected saying that the wages would be too low, but a few women volunteered to try it. When Mrs. Chung returned with some examples of their work, she pleaded with the president of the company to build a factory for the young people in her village. When he asked if they had a hall for his looms, she was forced to say that they already had one.

They were finally given ten new *Obizime* hand operated looms which Mrs. Chung had to install in her own house in October, 1973. Ten of the most skillful girls were selected and an expert weaver from Japan visited to teach them the techniques of making *Obi*. The first few belts were not woven very well, but they improved rapidly after Mrs. Chung reminded the girls that their work would symbolize the quality of Korean craftsmanship when they were eventually sold in Japan.

Similar machines were installed experimentally in four other villages, but because the work done in Oryu *Li* was superior, the company agreed to build them a hall for their own factory. Then the machines from Mrs. Chung's house and those from the other villages were installed, and on January 15, 1974, the official opening ceremony was held to honor its completion. Forty-eight girls, who had been forced to leave and work in the city, have returned to learn to weave and to earn their

living in Oryu *Li*. Mrs. Chung's most difficult problem with the Mothers' Club was the members' lack of basic education, so she immediately began special courses for the girls to compensate for the school which their families were unable to afford for them. As they were too tired to study at night, they used the time from 8:00-9:00 a.m. for a middle school correspondence course, and worked from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., with one hour for lunch and one hour for recreation in the afternoon. With skill, each girl can earn about US $1.00 per day, which is more than twice as much as their mothers were making harvesting rice on the neighboring farms. Mrs. Chung has never forgotten the remarks that a university professor made to her in Seoul the year before: *"any country that attaches importance to women's education is on the road to development."*

17. New Land for the Village

In the winter of 1973-1974, the villagers of Oryu *Li* heard a rumor that the government planned to sell the Mothers' Club's reclaimed land by the river to private individuals—the same land that they had cleared to grow barley. They had obtained permission to use this land, and they had been paying taxes for it each year. Mrs. Chung informed the New Village Movement leader, and he and her husband spent over two months going through the necessary procedures to purchase the land from the County government. They were nearly finished when the Provincial Government intervened and prevented the County office from handling the matter, claiming that the land near the river belonged to the Province.

Desperate to save the land they had struggled so hard to obtain, they found that they had no one to turn to except their Mothers' Club. Fortunately, by the time this problem occurred, the power of the club had grown considerably. Most of the County and Provincial officials had grown accustomed to dealing directly with Mrs. Chung rather than the village chief when they wanted the village to do something. It was easier for the club to gather the villagers for meetings, and to get their cooperation. Furthermore, the success of their Mothers' Club had spread throughout Korea, and by the time their land was threatened Mrs. Chung was making regular appearances as a guest lecturer at the New Village Movement Training Institute in SuWon (near Seoul). She had recognized long ago that villages in Korea where high government officials were born, or had relatives, could easily get support for their

projects, whereas villages like Oryu *Li* had no one to rely on for support except themselves.

Mrs. Chung finally went to the Provincial Government and argued for a whole day with the head of the Planning Department. The Mothers' Club of Oryu *Li* had become "famous enough that they had to hear our claims." The government yielded finally to their demands for the land.

Purchasing the land used up all of the village's extra money. The family clan fund of over one hundred sacks of rice was quickly depleted, and if it had not been for the Mothers' Club general fund, which had grown to over one million *won* ($2,500), they would *not* have been able to obtain the land. Ironically, it was *land,* the oldest and most traditional value in Korea, that led to the final integration of the Mothers' Club with the traditional family clan system in Oryu *Li.*

Perceived Benefits and Costs of the Mothers' Club*

Before turning our attention to the factors that contributed to this remarkable growth, we must evaluate this achievement from the villagers' own point of view. What do they think are the most important achievements of the Mothers' Club? Which projects are they most proud of? How have they benefited personally? What was the personal cost or inconvenience?

To answer these questions it was necessary to determine what distinctions, if any, the villagers made among the various types of women's groups operating in the village. The PPFK Mothers' Clubs were the first to be organized in 1968. These were followed by the Ministry of Agriculture's New Life Clubs. Then in 1972, through the Ministry of Home Affairs, the New Village Movement (NVM) began the integration of these two organizations, and included other women's groups that existed in many villages, into one *Women's Club* for integrated rural development.

Until Jeon Ra Bug *Do* began employing women to promote NVM Women's Clubs in each *myon,* only PPFK had sufficient personnel employed specifically to organize and assist these groups. The more common practice was for all government workers on the local level (agricultural, health, etc.) to use the village women's *group* whenever they thought this would help them to accomplish their job more

*This section was written prior to the follow-up visit in August, 1974, so the village factory and new village land could not yet have been considered as benefits of the club.

efficiently. In fact, one of the rationales for integrating all of these various women's groups into one general Women's Club was to eliminate some of the confusion, duplication, and competition among different government workers: to integrate and coordinate the efforts of government and voluntary workers, as well as the village women.

In all three of the villages that we visited we found very little confusion on the part of the women themselves. In most cases, there is only *one* group of women who quite easily change their name from Mothers' Club, to New Life Club, to NVM Women's Club depending upon which officials are visiting the village, or upon the main topic or activity of their meeting. There is a tendency, however, to use "Mothers' Club" to refer to their group in general, because (a) it was the first name and purpose of their group, (b) the mutual credit union, which has high priority, was first promoted by PPFK, and (c) most of the other objectives have always been part of their Mothers' Club activities. Village women want their families and village environment to improve. As long as a specific activity or project contributes to this goal, the name you give it, or the government program to which it is related, is probably not a very crucial issue *for them.*

In Oryu *Li,* for example, the Mothers' Club is described as a "meeting" for: (a) family planning and children's education, (b) saving rice and money for a better life, and (c) developing the local society and the mother's quality. The New Life Club merely elicits a more specific, concrete response: (a) to improve our food (diet), (b) to make our kitchens and village more sanitary, (c) to simplify life with the standard domestic ceremony, and (d) to live simply and save money for our children's education. One woman used the Mothers' Club name when answering questions about the New Life Club. The purpose of the NVM Women's Club is also perceived on a more general level: (a) to make the village peaceful and wealthy, (b) to be a good, faithful housewife and to help one's neighbors, and (c) to improve life by working and saving diligently in the Mothers' Club. When asked about specific projects or accomplishments, they are likely to attribute many of them to more than one type of club. The Oryu *Li* club had officially changed their name to the more general "Women's Club," but during their discussions they continued to refer to themselves as the "Mothers' Club."

The *credit union* and the *chestnut tree project* were mentioned most frequently as accomplishments of the Mothers' Club by the six couples that we interviewed, followed closely by *family planning.* The *kitchen improvement* project and their *children's education* were next,

but it should be noted that education was often mentioned as the ultimate purpose of the savings and credit union. The only other accomplishments that received more than a few references were the *school for mothers* and the *cooperative store*. These were the tangible projects of which these couples were most proud.

Many of the mothers and their husbands also attributed improvements in their attitudes, their orientations toward life, and their relationships with others to the efforts of the Mothers' Club. The statements that were made about these changes are much too revealing to attempt a summary. The wives' statements will be presented first, followed by some of their husbands' remarks:

Mothers' Club Members

> "The most important thing was changing the disordered life to the ordered life" (Mrs. Chung).
>
> "We have come to recognize that it is not necessary to have many children and the fewer children we have, the higher education we can give them . . . we are now expecting our descendants to live more comfortably, happily, and sufficiently in the future than we have. I feel happy when I imagine that . . . after we die, our descendants will thank us for our deeds for their happiness" (Mrs. Kim).
>
> "I have learned to be diligent . . . because we had to work hard in the house to participate in the Mothers' Club meetings. I learned patience myself because I am a leader of the Mothers' Club, and I have also attained a harmonious home life" (Mrs. Choi Yang Soon).
>
> "In the past, it took over a week to plant the rice in our stony field, but this year in cooperation with one another we finished in one day . . . at the meetings I can hear something useful for our life and I am encouraged and hopeful when someone says that we can lead a better life in the future by working hard today" (Mrs. Park).

The Members' Husbands

> "In the past they [the mothers] only obeyed their husbands and followed them, but now through education and communication with the family planning fieldworker they have their own ideas and persuade their husbands (Mr. Kang, Mrs. Kim's husband).
>
> "They learned to be more cautious about their conduct and what they say, so they refined their relationships and attitudes toward their parents. Today there are no loud voices in the house . . . the most important thing is the team spirit . . . they also show a good example to their husbands in the New Village Movement" (Mr. Chang, Mrs. Chung's husband).
>
> "[They learned] . . . to be dutiful to their parents-in-law, to take better care of their husbands, and knowledge of their children's education . . . the Mothers' Club enlightens the people to save money; this is the basic spirit of the club" (Mr. Chung, Mrs. Park's husband).
>
> "The Mothers' Club members are all active and earnest in many kinds of domestic duties. They work together very well. [They]. . . enlightened other villagers about family planning . . . practiced it for themselves and persuaded other mothers to practice it" (Mr. Kang, *Li* Chief, Mrs. Choi's husband).
>
> "We want to use the funds as a scholarship and establish a factory in the village by 1975 so there won't be any boys and girls leaving their homes. We are saving money to use for the welfare of our village" (Mr. Kang, *Li* Chief, Mrs. Choi's husband).

Because the villagers that we interviewed were proud that we had chosen their club to study, they were much more inclined to mention the advantages rather than the disadvantages of the Mothers' Club. Nevertheless, once the benefits were thoroughly described, many respondents

were willing to reveal some of the difficulties and problems that exist. The most frequent complaint by the members was that the club activities sometimes demanded too much time for them to keep up with their household duties.

Some said it was difficult at times to leave their home to work on their projects. Mrs. Kim said that sometimes she is too busy working for the club to visit her child's school when they ask her to come for counseling. Surprisingly, two husbands (Mr. Kang and Mr. Chung) said that they occasionally miss their supper because *they* are working on Mothers' Club projects. The leader's husband complained about a lack of "stability" for his children because their home is used for so many meetings. These are minor complaints, however. Most would probably agree with Mr. Kang, the *Li* Chief, who said, "Of course there is some interference in my private life, but I can endure it for a better life in the future."

There were references to potential conflicts that could develop into more serious problems in the future. Mr. Chang (the leader's husband), for instance, said that he sometimes ". . . felt uneasy, because the club takes measures too urgently to meet certain situations, especially the collection of funds for education." During her interview, Mrs. Chung noted, "In the past [members] only acted as the leader ordered, but now they act with their own will." Apparently, Mr. Kang, the *Li* Chief, was not completely convinced of this: "I think that the Mothers' Club sometimes ignores the point of view of some members who cannot express their opinions well. I want the club to respect all members' opinions and work cooperatively." Mrs. Chung has been a very dynamic, forceful leader who has earned her followers' respect and trust by her actions. It is difficult to say whether or not her personal style of leadership will cause more friction as other members grow and develop more leadership capabilities of their own. The fact that she, her husband, and the *Li* Chief are at least aware of this problem makes this seem less likely.

The *Li* Chief also noted that once or twice there was some conflict between the Mothers' Club and the Young Men's Club over the division of the future profit from the chestnut tree project. He attributed this conflict to their eagerness and tendency to compete with each other in some activities. Large sums of money are always a potential source of conflict. The club leader will always have to be extremely careful about how their funds are handled. She has always been unselfish in the past, buying agricultural tools for *everyone* when money was donated, and even using some of her own funds to pay her extra expenses as leader.

Mothers' Club and the Process of Change

The seventeen critical events, from the founding of the Mothers' Club to the purchase of the new land by the river bed describe a remarkable process of growth, development, and social change. A concise summary of these events is presented in Figure 3.

The events are organized in this figure to illustrate the process of change and development of Oryu *Li's* Mothers' Club from 1968 to 1974. Because the information used to reconstruct these events was collected after the events occurred, it was not possible to *measure* any of the specific effects that each event may have had on the members of the club or other villagers. Nevertheless, we may hypothesize what may have been the most important outcomes of each of these events.

For example, fixing special meals, exemplifying the traditional values held by their husbands, and earning extra income in Event No. 2 undoubtedly contributed to the *rationalization* and justification of their meeting openly as a club. The cash-crop projects (No. 10) probably increased the rationalization for their club, too, but it may also have increased their sense of *diligence* or *perseverence*, simply because they continued struggling with these projects (barley, for example) over a long period of time in spite of setbacks and failures. They were able to persevere perhaps because they had previous successes to sustain them: better *leadership*, more *confidence*, more *vision* of the future, greater *solidarity*, and so forth. In fact, the changes that occurred earlier undoubtedly explain why they were so successful later.

The implications of this process analysis are clear: *the order of these critical events was crucial to the development of the Mothers' Club and the village of Oryu* Li. The most obvious example of this principle may be seen at Event No. 12. It would have been unthinkable for the leader of the Mothers' Club to have risked such a confrontation with the village men without the club's prior history of successful contributions to the village, or without the support that they had gained outside of their own village by that time. Once past this new confrontation, however, they certainly must have gained a greater *self-respect*, and much more *respect* from other village men and women.

We know that many other events occurred that have not been reported here. It seems reasonable to assume that not all events would have the same impact on the club's development, and that the events that did have the most impact would be recalled by members of the club. This is the nature of these seventeen *critical* events, and it explains why

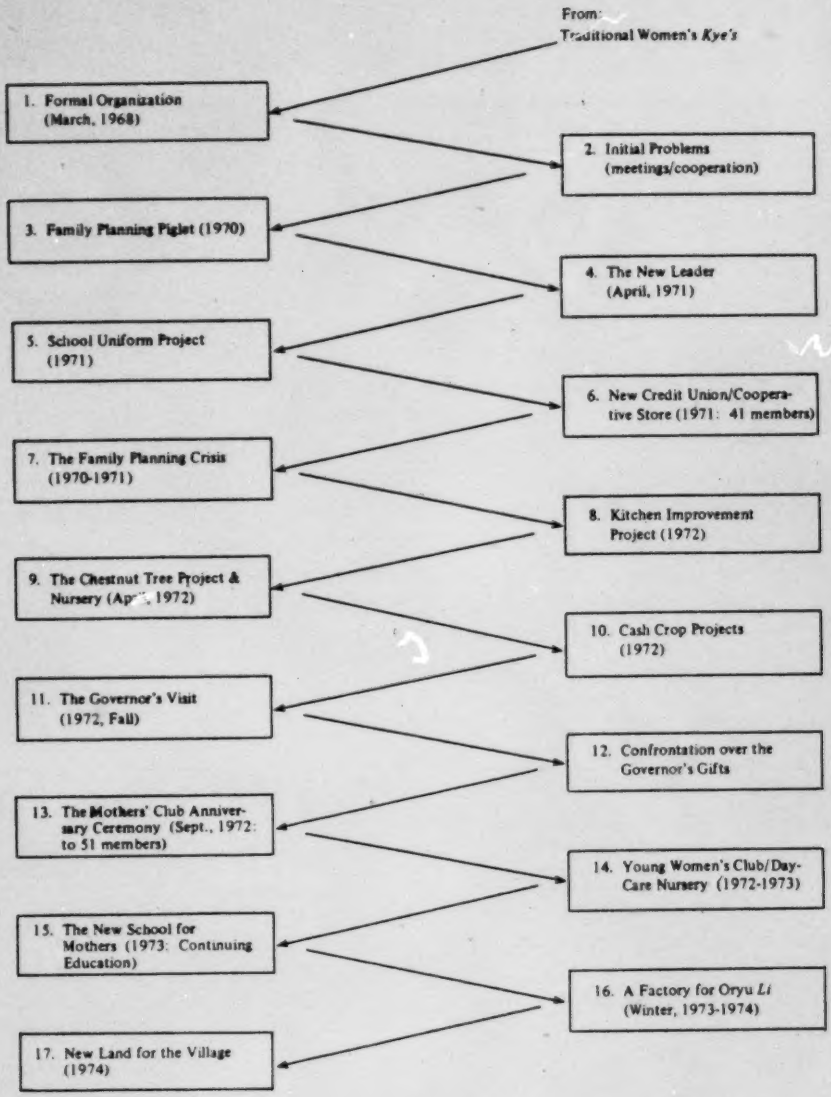
From:
Traditional Women's *Kye's*
1. Formal Organization (March, 1968)
2. Initial Problems (meetings/cooperation)
3. Family Planning Piglet (1970)
4. The New Leader (April, 1971)
5. School Uniform Project (1971)
6. New Credit Union/Cooperative Store (1971: 41 members)
7. The Family Planning Crisis (1970-1971)
8. Kitchen Improvement Project (1972)
9. The Chestnut Tree Project & Nursery (Apr[illegible], 1972)
10. Cash Crop Projects (1972)
11. The Governor's Visit (1972, Fall)
12. Confrontation over the Governor's Gifts
13. The Mothers' Club Anniversary Ceremony (Sept., 1972: to 51 members)
14. Young Women's Club/Day-Care Nursery (1972-1973)
15. The New School for Mothers (1973: Continuing Education)
16. A Factory for Oryu *Li* (Winter, 1973-1974)
17. New Land for the Village (1974)

FIGURE 3. Approximate Sequence of the Seventeen Critical Events in the Development of the Oryu Li *Mothers' Club*

both the Mothers' Club members and the authors have purposely selected them for this case study. We have no way of knowing conclusively the outcome of each event. What we *do* know, however, is that the state of the Mothers' Club and the village of Oryu *Li* was dramatically different in 1974 from what it had been in 1968.

In 1968, many of the club meetings had to be held secretly; by 1974, other village groups and associations were scheduling their meetings in order *not to interfere* with Mothers' Club meetings or work projects. In 1968, cooperation among the villagers was very poor; no one believed that they could do very much to increase their meager credit and savings fund. By 1974, their fund had grown to over 600,000 *won* plus a substantial list of assets (livestock, inventory, chestnut trees, etc.), a village factory, and a new parcel of land. Interpersonal relations and cooperation improved greatly within the family and the community as more and more members joined. Their efforts have brought them renown and recognition in Jeon Ra Bug *Do* and throughout the rest of Korea. In 1974 their club is a model for others.

Family planning, which was once practiced with shame, secrecy, and ignorance, is now practiced openly by all of Oryu *Li's* eligible mothers. It is being taught to young girls over the age of 17, and there is a growing recognition that two children, regardless of sex, are enough for future families of Korea. Finally, there has been a basic reevaluation of what *women* can do for their family and community, and for the development of Korea once they have seen the vision of their own power.

APPENDIX A: TWO COMPARATIVE CASES: THE MOTHERS' CLUB OF WAE AM LI AND DOO KOK LI

The Inactive Mothers' Club of Wae Am Li

Village: Wae Am *Li*
Township: Song Ack *Myon*
County: Asan *Kun*
Province: Chung Chong Nam *Do*

Organized in: 1971
No. Members: 33
Credit Union: $175
Meetings: Scheduled monthly, but actually meet only during the season when least occupied
Family Planning Practice: 26%

Cooperative Projects:

Mutual credit union ($175)
Making flower bed at village entrance for village beautification
Planting trees along the bank and road for village beautification
Cleaning the village meeting hall
Helping to widen the village road

Outstanding Features:

This village was purposely selected from one of the most conservative, traditional areas of Korea, where resistance to family planning is strongest, and where change in the role of women is lowest. It is not unusual then that the Mothers' Club here is relatively inactive, nor that the practice rate for family planning is low and still improper as a topic

for public discussion. Historically, Wae Am *Li* is the center of the former *yangban* (nobleman's) Lee Clan, which was the dominant family clan during the last Yi dynasty. Consequently, it is the most Confucian village of the three case histories, and members of the clan still attempt to maintain the traditional values of the past: filial piety, respect for elders, lineage loyalty and continuity, and proper behavior in specified dyadic relationships (king and subject, elder and younger, father and son, husband and wife, and close friends). The *yangban's* traditional disdain for manual labor and individual initiative has made cooperative development extremely difficult. Much of the clan's landholdings and wealth have dissolved over the last 70 years, but even their current level of poverty has failed to weaken the traditional set of values upon which their personal sense of self-esteem is still dependent. The young, of course, leave the village if they cannot adjust to the old ways.

The effect of *yangban* dominance on contemporary rural development has been well described by Pak and Lee's study of three clan villages.* The village which was still dominated by the former *Yangban* clan organization was characterized by a "sharp cleavage" between lineage members and former commoners. Great effort was given to promoting clan unity and retaining the social prestige of the *yangban* through ancestor worship, study of Confucian classics, and other clan business. Traditional, authoritarian leadership was exercised to maintain conservative norms in the interests of the dominant clan. On the other hand, in the village dominated by a commoners clan, cohesion was characterized by egalitarian cooperation, mutual assistance, and economic improvement projects rather than maintenance of class distinction and social prestige. The more egalitarian village was most successful in adopting technological innovations, and hence was actually more prosperous than the former *Yangban* village.

Such conditions obviously make any woman's organization and family planning difficult to say the least. When the first family planning fieldworker appeared in the village she was promptly beaten by a village elder for talking to the women about contraception. The woman first identified as the Mothers' Club leader by the PPFK promoter quickly denied holding the office, and pointed out another, older woman as leader. This woman was appointed leader by mandate of the village chief

*Pak, K.H. & Lee, S.Y., *Three Clan Villages in Korea.* Seoul: Yonsei University, 1963.

(upon request of higher governmental officials). She was relatively inactive as a leader; and undisposed to take any initiative on her own. This response is quite consistent, however, with the traditional folk saying that "misfortune will fall upon any house in which the hen crows like the rooster."

Village behavior patterns are often defended (explained) with similar traditional proverbs and sayings. One of the male opinion leaders of the village told us that to discuss family planning in public is equivalent to revealing the most private sexual behavior of one's wife to others, and hence, strictly taboo. To him, overpopulation was not a significant problem. Fifty years ago their village had 300 households; now there are only 80. Food? "Every child given by the heaven brings his own food to the world." Education? "Not all children need or should receive higher education . . . someone has to do manual labor, work in the fields, etc." (although no class distinction was made explicit, this statement again reflects the influence of *yangban* origins).

Such conservative sentiment has opposed innovation and change throughout rural Korea, as in other parts of the world. In Korea, however, especially in extremely conservative areas, the veto of one or two influential elders is usually enough to block a proposal or new idea that has the backing of the community. Other villagers can easily be discouraged quickly by the strong opposition of a few respected elders, and by the possibility of a permanent break in good community relations. This deference to elders strengthens their ability to defend the status quo. This means that to be successful, any joint effort must be whole-hearted and unanimous, because the likelihood of trouble makes most people reluctant to act.

Young people who cannot tolerate such rigidity often must choose to move away from the village rather than cause undue disruption of traditional norms. Although the use of contraceptives may be kept *secret*, operation of a Mothers' Club for the specific function of diffusing family planning can be blocked if a few key elders strongly oppose the practice. It became apparent immediately that opposition to family planning and to outside activities by women had seriously undermined the activities of the Mothers' Club in Wae Am *Li*.

Wae Am *Li* is an extreme example, but it is similar to other villages from the same area. Nevertheless, it does represent the other end of the continuum of rural Korean villages. It underscores many of the socio-cultural constraints that have been overcome in other villages. By

comparing Wae Am *Li* with a more modern village like Oryu *Li* we can see many of the important changes that may have to take place in rural Korean villages, especially regarding the role of women in society, before women's clubs and family planning can be accepted.

The Active Mothers' Club of Doo Kok Li

Village: Doo Kok *Li*
Before 7/1/73:
Township: Nae Shu *Myon*
County: Chang Won *Kun*
After 7/1/73:
Urban District: Hae Sung Dong
City: Masan
Province: Oyeong Sang Nam *Do*

Organized in: 1968
No. Members: 40
Credit Union: $300
Meetings: Once per month
Family Planning Practice: 57% of eligible members

Cooperative Projects:

Mutual credit union ($300)
Building a bridge for the village and improving the roads
Establishing a community flower garden
Adoption of modern sanitary practices to improve community health
Sweeping village roads and weeding public grounds
Sponsoring annual supper with entertainment for village elders
Home industry, or "side job," such as sewing clothes to earn money

Outstanding Features:

Although the cooperative spirit is good in this village, its level of fervor is not as high as that of O-yu *Li.* The felt need for village improvement is not as strong here, probably because this village has always been in a much better economic condition. It is located on the periphery of Masan City, and this year it was legally annexed. Many of their children and husbands are able to find employment in the city, so that extra, non-farm income finds its way back to the village. Two-thirds of their husbands have non-agricultural occupations, whereas in Wae Am *Li*

almost everyone (87%) works in agriculture. Proximity to the city is also advantageous to making extra income through side jobs such as sewing clothes. It also makes further education for their children much easier.

The characteristic which best reflects these conditions, and which distinguishes this Mothers' Club from the one in Oryu *Li*, is the intended use (collective) of money saved in the mutual credit union. The finance of collective income-producing projects for the eventual education of their children is paramount in Oryu *Li* whereas the intended use here is either individual, or when collective, for activities such as sightseeing tours outside the village.

Leadership is not quite as dynamic in Doo Kok *Li* as in Oryu *Li*, but it is effective as far as family planning is concerned. The leader also has a high school education. This, plus the fact that her brother is a doctor, makes her a very credible source of information about family planning and health in general. In fact, she keeps household medicines as well as birth control pills for community distribution. Both men and women in this village seem quite willing to talk to others about family planning methods and their advantages for their family and their nation. The traditional, more conservative values and norms are no longer as strong as they are in Wae Am *Li*.

APPENDIX B: ONE YEAR LATER: AN INTERVIEW WITH MRS. CHUNG, LEADER OF ORYU LI'S MOTHERS' CLUB

*June Ock Yum**
August 20, 1974

Q. What has happened to you and the Mothers' Club since we visited you last July?

A. We now have 50 members in our club; three have moved out of the village. Our projects have been quite successful. The Young Men's Club is still taking care of the chestnut nursery, even though it is not very successful. Because of floods, we lost about 30% of our seedlings. One seedling is now worth 80 *won*.** As for new income projects, we are now raising pigs. We were loaned 120 new piglets to raise, and later on we will pay them back. So now 19 families are raising 5 pigs each. Three more households are raising piglets from the Mothers' Club pig, and 15 families are raising new piglets. We received 2,600,000 *won* for Oriental herb fields, and we are now growing ten different kinds of herbs.

Once while I was attending a workshop in Seoul, a university professor said that any country that attaches importance to woman's education would be on the road to development, but others who disregard it would not. Since then, these words have been lingering in my heart. While working for the Mothers' Club one thing I always regret is that most mothers lack so much basic

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*June Ock Yum, graduate student in Communication at EWCI translated the tapes for the interview.

**One U.S. dollar is worth about 400 *won*.

knowledge. So besides family planning I have tried to teach them other things. I have focused on three subjects. First, improvement of nutrition. We planted green and red vegetables very successfully and our village was selected as a model village for nutritional self-support. We will have a model carrot nursery soon. Second, the improvement of farming, such as land improvement and methods of cultivation. And third, the health of mother and child. While teaching these things, it turned out that our mothers lacked so much basic knowledge that it took a long time to teach them.

So I thought it was necessary to teach our young girls the basic subjects of school. Last December, we started a *Baik Hap* (lily) night school for the 48 girls working in the village factory. We chose the junior high school standard five subjects: English, Japanese, Abacus Accounting, Korean, and History. Four other villagers volunteered to help me teach them. But the girls didn't show much interest, even though it was for free. So we changed directions, and on March 10 we supplied correspondence course books at 500 *won* each. Each month we give tests and choose the two best girls and award them by buying their books. Since they are too tired to study at night, we make them come to the factory ten minutes before 8:00 a.m., and for ten minutes we sing together to a mini-electronic organ which we recently purchased for that purpose. From 8:00-9:00 a.m. we teach them the correspondence course. Since the book is designed for self-study, we teach only English and Mathematics and encourage them to study at night by themselves.

Working hours for the girls are from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., with one hour for lunch and one hour for rest in the afternoon. They are provided with volleyball and table tennis. To encourage their spirit for thrift and savings at an early age, we obtained a written pledge from their parents to let all the girls join 4-H Club and save 30% of their earnings every month. So, on April 25th we formed a "sister" unit with the *Sung Soo Myon* Cooperative Union and contracted a 4,250,000 *won* installment savings. Each girl has from 50,000 to 100,000 *won* of installment savings, and she deposits part of her income every month. Each girl also subscribes to "Friends of the Family" for 200 *won*. Their average earnings range from 10,000 to 15,000 *won* per month, depending on how many belts (*obi*) they produce. This is a lot of money in terms of

other village income. Mrs. Kang said that her daughter earned 5,500 *won* last month after deducting her deposit money and 500 *won* for her own use.

Q. *What kind of problems has the club had since last year, and how have you dealt with them?*

A. The factory was the most difficult thing we had to solve. When I first asked them to build a factory in our village I was rejected. I had to visit them again and again and plead with them to build a factory for us. Also, the girls working in the factory didn't understand at first that the silk belts to be exported to Japan would represent Korea there. They only tried to make as many as possible to earn more. Now that they understand they are doing much better work.

Another problem arose from the Mothers' Club fund. As more and more money accumulated, many members became suspicious that I might misappropriate it. Now they understand the principle of the fund, and there is no problem. The general Mothers' Club is 1,036,000 *won* in cash. We bought two calves and two members are breeding them. Besides pig raising and the Oriental herb field, we are now organizing a children's study room. In the children's study room, there are ten desks and some books so that children can study when they return from school. Their own houses cannot provide them any rooms for study.

The biggest project that we have started since last year is the Oriental herb field in which we grow ten different kinds of herbs. The leader of the herb project is the Vice-Chairman of the Young Men's Club. From time to time he goes to the *Kun* office to learn how to grow herbs, and then he teaches the others. We have two working groups, one for raising pigs, and another for the herb project on which Young Men's Club and Mothers' Club cooperate. Members of Young Men's Club are mostly sons of Mothers' Club members.

Q. *Who else has visited your Mothers' Club since last December? Why did they visit?*

A. After reading about us in the Chosun Daily Newspaper, the Korean

Broadcasting Company came down and filmed for four days here. They produced a 20-minute show for TV on September 4th, under the title of "A Human Victory." I am now a regular lecturer of the Suwon New Village Training Institute where the ministers and vice-ministers of all government offices, the presidents of large companies, and high generals stay two or three days to receive training. While I was teaching there, the presidents of many large companies collected 100,000 *won* to buy the chairs and desks for our children's study room, and we are now keeping the money in check. Also as a reward for our hard work, presidential donations of 700,000 *won* were given to our village to build a Mothers' Club Meeting Hall. We are planning a building which will accommodate the children's study rooms, a day nursery, a cooperative kitchen, our cooperative store, and a wedding hall. It will be about a 30 *pyong* building.

Q. *What have you done to help other women leaders in other villages, for example, through the* Myon *or* Kun *Mothers' Club Association?*

A. I am the chairwoman of *Kun* Association of Mothers' Clubs that consists of 36 members. We meet once every two months on the 19th, and each time we visit a village that has been successful in the New Village Movement or the village beautification programs. We pay our own transportation fee and the village leader prepares the others' lunches. We usually discuss our present situation and make plans for the next two months. We give prizes four times a year to the leaders who are the most successful in getting their village to adopt the vasectomy or loop methods of family planning.

Q. *Do the mothers from the poorest families in your village belong to the Mothers' Club?*

A. The present Mothers' Club membership is 50. Most of the mothers in the village want to join, but they are unable to. Our present members have accumulated such a large joint fund that it is difficult for others to deposit one member's amount to become a new member. But the rest of them are quasi-members and they join the Mothers' Club credit union. They keep their own passbook and attend the monthly meetings. There are 112 quasi-members, so nearly all village women are members.

Q. What does your village eventually plan to do with your savings funds?

A. A scholarship for our young people is our ultimate goal. When we first started to collect money for the joint "better life fund," we planned to build a village factory. But we have already accomplished this another way. Education for young people has become more and more important to every villager. During the New Village Movement, the villages where high officials were born could get support very easily, but our village has nobody to support us. For village development, educated and capable people are crucial. This scholarship for young people in the village is our ultimate plan. There is also a special fund for the Prevention of Epidemics and Sanitation. It is practiced not only here but throughout Jeon Ra Bug Province. We deposit 50 *won* every month, and twice a year we purchase parasiticide for all villagers to take together. At 10 o'clock at night we announce loudly through a speaker for the whole village to take parasiticide. Then at 5 o'clock the next morning we broadcast it again and beat the gong loudly so that everybody is reminded to take it again. After that many people commented that the medicine was very effective. I prefer to use the money to educate mothers, not to repair the roofs or walls. Many members have asked to study the abacus and Chinese character together, so we plan to start our Mothers' Club school again this winter.

Q. How many different types of savings and credit funds does this village have?

A. The Mothers' Club Fund is divided into two kinds: a Joint Fund for a Better Life, and a Savings and Credit Fund for personal deposit. There is a small, special installment savings for the Prevention of Epidemics and Village Sanitation Program. We keep the money in our village safe. I used to be the treasurer, but now the Vice Leader is taking care of the bookkeeping and serves as our treasurer. Her ability for double-entry bookkeeping is the real example that anything is possible if one tries sincerely. I could do it because I graduated from High School and had 10 days of training in Seoul. The Vice Leader only graduated from elementary school, and she is over 50 years old. But I taught her, and she helped me whenever I prepared the financial reports. Now she is doing all the bookkeeping perfectly by herself.

Q. *What other kinds of assets or property does the Mothers' Club or your New Village Movement Women's Group now have?*

A. We now have a chestnut nursery, a cooperative store, livestock (144 pigs and 3 cows), and an Oriental herb field.

Q. *How much from the Mothers' Club bank is currently loaned out to members?*

A. All the money is currently loaned out. In 1971 when I first became leader each household averaged 50,000 *won* in debts to the agricultural cooperative union. Every family was badly in need of money and borrowed heavily from the Mothers' Club bank all the time. Since then most families have gotten out of debt. The reason that all the money is loaned out now is because we just purchased new farm land from the government. As you know, our village really lacked land, so we cultivated the riverside land which was government owned. When we heard that the land would be sold to private individuals we used all the money in the village to buy it; the Mothers' Club fund and the clan fund (about 100 sacks of rice) were all used up. If it were not for Mothers' Club fund, our village would have been deprived of its land by the river.

When my husband and I moved here from the mountains I noticed that there was a lot of uncultivated land along the river. So we measured the riverbank and got permission to cultivate 3,000 *pyong*. At first other villagers thought we were crazy trying to cultivate land filled with pebbles and sand. Anyway we cultivated it, and paid the taxes each year. Then we were told that the whole area would be sold by the government. I told the New Village leader, and he and my husband spent two months going through the procedure to buy the land. They were nearly finished when the Provincial Government stopped the *Kun* office from handling the matter because they claimed the land belonged to the Provincial Government. So I met with Provincial officials and finally settled the matter. These days the Mothers' Club has become famous enough that they would hear our claims.

Q. *What is the usual or average size of personal loans from this fund?*

A. Ten percent of the total fund is the limit for one loan. For instance,

if the fund is 1,000,000 *won*, a member can borrow up to 100,000 *won*. But since it should be used equally by all; the average size of personal loans is actually about 35,000 *won*.

Q. *How soon must these personal loans be paid back?*

A. There is no time limit. The interest is as low as bank interest, and they can be paid back in installments. Usually people pay back four times a year; spring, fall, after the government purchasing of rice, and after government purchasing of barley, or in July after they sell their silkworm.

Q. *Is there very much of a problem getting members to pay back money which they have borrowed from the fund?*

A. Recently there was one case. One member who moved out of the village didn't pay all of her debts. She borrowed 20,000 *won* in cash which she paid back, but also two sacks of rice which she didn't pay back. Many members said we should attach their furniture, but since she promised she'd pay this fall, I guaranteed her loan and let her go.

Q. *Do you think members of Mothers' Club know more about national affairs and provincial affairs since they joined the Mothers' Club?*

A. Sure. Also, if the *Kun* or Provincial officials want something to be done they let us know first rather than the *Li* Chief, because through us it is much easier to gather people and have a meeting. If there is a Mothers' Club meeting everybody attends above all things. The power of Mothers' Club is very strong now. As for purchasing our land, I myself went to Provincial Government and met with the head of the Planning Department, arguing with him for a whole day. Otherwise it would have been impossible. And recently there was a shortage of fodder for pigs, because fodder was limited and there were so many people raising pigs. *Kun* officials gave special treatment to us since it was for the Mothers' Club project, and they allocated enough fodder to us.

Q. *Would you say that in this village wives have a stronger voice than their husbands sometimes?*

A. Women's power has grown very much. But our village has both strong points and weak points. Since many of the village people are not members, if we try to do something in which the whole village should work together, sometimes there are difficulties. At first the members of the Mothers' Club did all the work, but the other village people began to depend on us too much. Even something like clearing the roads right in front of their house, which the village men should do, they expected us to do for them. So we tried to change directions. We clear at the back of the houses and let the men do the front. To build our Mothers' Club meeting hall we will try to make the men do all of the construction work. It is not easy though, to make a change like that. As for the members of Mothers' Club, they are doing very well, even when I am away. Recently, I have had to leave the village very often. Last time there was a flood on the outskirts of Seoul. When I returned from Seoul I found out that the members had already donated money voluntarily and sent it to Seoul. Also, when Mrs. Park was assassinated I was attending Expo '74 in Seoul. I returned one day earlier than I had planned and I found that the Mothers' Club members and the rest of the village were having a meeting in memory of her. The next day, 20 women volunteered to go to the Provincial Government Office in white dress to offer prayers for Mrs. Park. The village people first heard the news on the radio, but since my house and one other house have T.V.'s we watched the details and funeral on television together.

Q. *Is there any Men's Club in this village, something like the counterpart of Mothers' Club?*

A. No, there is only a Young Men's Club which consists of 17 young men. It was initially organized by the Mothers' Club. Since 70% of village people belong to one clan, the clan meeting is very important, but they are raising a fund just for the clan. They don't do anything for the village in general.

Q. *What do you think is the most important thing to be done now in Korea?*

A. First, anti-Communism. Second, I want family planning to be

regulated by law. Since I was an only child, and sometimes felt lonely when I was growing up, my parents showed special interest in me, and let me finish high school. Since I was from a very poor rural family, if my parents had had one more child, I would not have been able to finish high school. I would not have been as successful today. I couldn't practice family planning myself until I had four children. Now I wish I had only two so that we could lead an easier life and educate them better. In rural areas if a couple doesn't have a son they would never stop at two. I hope that family planning will be regulated by law so that everyone will stop at two, or pay special taxes or something. The oil and food crises should make this easier to do.

Q. *What is the most difficult thing for a Mothers' Club leader to do?*

A. Well, at first everyone was so enthusiastic and hard-working, but now their enthusiasm has declined. Nevertheless, compared to other villages we are still very cooperative, and our members are very responsive whenever we talk about something important.

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